Hafa Adai!

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OPINION METER

This week's poll:
Is the CNMI government doing enough to pursue corruption cases and other white-collar crimes on the islands?

Let your voice be heard! Go to www.saipantribune.com to cast your vote.

INSIDE

Obama Surges
Barack Obama cruised past a fading Hillary Rodham Clinton in the Wisconsin primary Tuesday night.
NATION...Page 16

Mystery Creatures
Scientists investigating the icy waters of Antarctica said they have collected many mysterious creatures.
WORLD...Page 17

Historic Legacy
Hayden Christensen no longer yearns to teleport himself away from interviews.
LIFE & STYLE...Page 18

Farallon now a public health hazard? **PAGE 2**
Budget process moving too slowly—Heinz. **PAGE 14**

'No mass govt termination, just elimination of vacant posts'

By AGNES E. DONATO
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REPORTER

The Fitial administration has denied that close to 1,000 government employees will be fired under the governor's budget proposal.

"It is disappointing that certain House members are making public statements that misinform the public regarding the governor's proposed FY 2008 budget," said acting Gov. Timothy P. Villagomez.

He explained that the proposed reduction of 964 full-time employees does not constitute a mass termination. It merely eliminates 964 vacant positions the government could not afford to fund in fiscal year 2008.

"You cannot fire anyone you have not

See NO MASS on Page 4

Furey resigns from NMC board

By RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN
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REPORTER

Eloise A. Furey has stepped down as a member of the Northern Marianas College Board of Regents.

According to Furey, she submitted her letter of resignation to the Governor's Office in early February.

She declined to give her reason for suddenly withdrawing

RELATED NEWS
NMC students host accreditation forum today.
PAGE 3

See FUREY on Page 4

FIRE IN THE HALL!
Firefighters from Micronesian islands, Guam, and CNMI try to extinguish a blaze at the engine and belly of a mockup 747 airplane during their advanced aircraft rescue fire fighting training yesterday at the Commonwealth Ports Authority's Fire Pit near the airport. ***See related story on Page 4.***

LEI OGUMORO

Cohen heads Pacific biz advisory team

Cohen

By AGNES E. DONATO
agnes_donato@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Bush administration's former point person for insular areas has joined an international law firm and will help head a new venture to advise companies that invest and operate in the Pacific.

David B. Cohen, who stepped down as deputy assistant secretary for Insular Affairs last month, now works with Davis Wright Tremaine LLP. He will co-head DWT Pacific, which is the first unified trans-Pacific legal and business advisory team in the market.

See COHEN on Page 4

US cancer deaths rose by 5,400 in '05

ON THE NET
American Cancer Society report: http://www.cancer.org/statistics

By MIKE STOBBE
AP MEDICAL WRITER

ATLANTA (AP)—U.S. cancer deaths rose by more than 5,000 in 2005, a somewhat disappointing reversal of a two-year downward trend, the American Cancer Society said in a report issued Wednesday.

The group counted 559,312 people who died from cancer.

See US CANCER on Page 4

Local

Farallon now a public health hazard?

By AGNES E. DONATO
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REPORTER

A senator has asked a federal agency to conduct a public health assessment on Farallon de Mendinilla.

Sen. Luis P. Crisostimo made the request to the U.S. Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry amid concern about the military's use of the island as a live-fire bombing range.

"The people of the CNMI extremely concerned that the artillery littering the island has become a significant public health hazard," Crisostimo told the agency.

"Toxic substances released by the bombs have contaminated the soil and surrounding waters causing damage to wildlife, fish, and coral on and around FDM. The bioaccumulation of these toxins in consumable pelagic fish may be a real and imminent health hazard to our people," he added.

Farallon de Mendinilla has been used as a live fire range since 1976, pursuant to a lease agreement between the U.S. and CNMI governments. The lease is for 50 years with a possible 50-year extension.

The U.S. military reported that last year saw the most bombings occur on Farallon de Mendinilla in the past eight years.

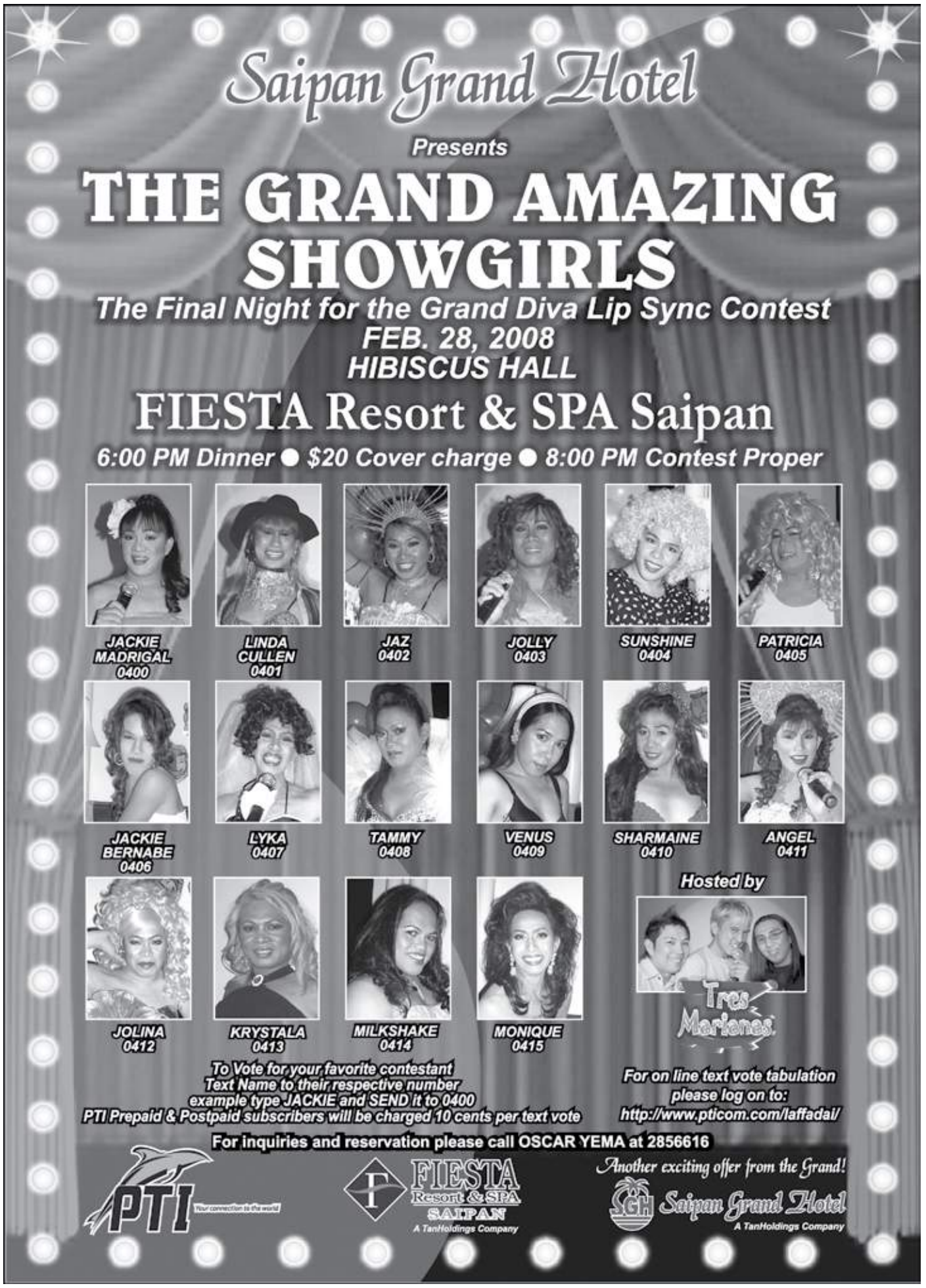
In 2007, a total of 3,277 ordnance were dropped on the island located north of Saipan. This more than nearly double the number of ordnance dropped on FDM in 2005 and 2006 combined.

In the past eight-year period, the second largest number of bombings on FDM occurred in 2001. A total of 3,039 ordnance were dropped on the island in that year.

The U.S. Navy is currently updating its environmental impact study on the Marianas range complex. The last such study was done in 1999. The new study will take into account changes in military technology and training requirement.

The Joint Guam Program Office is conducting its environmental impact study on the planned military buildup in the region.

Public scoping meetings have been conducted on both studies.



Appeal in catering bid denied

By AGNES E. DONATO
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REPORTER

The Office of the Public Auditor has dismissed an appeal filed by a losing bidder for a food catering contract with the Department of Corrections.

Public Auditor Michael S. Sablan said the appeal was filed too late.

The deadline for the contractor, Bolis-R-Us Catering, to file its appeal with OPA was Dec. 10, 2007. Although the appeal received by OPA was dated Dec. 10, it was not delivered to OPA until Dec. 12, 2007.

Sablan noted that OPA did not receive any information that would have caused OPA to consider the appeal even though it was untimely filed.

He said that Bolis failed to show why the award of the contract to the lowest bidder violated procurement regulations. He added that Bolis was the fourth lowest bidder and would not be considered for award unless the three lower bidders were determined to be not responsible, or otherwise dropped out of the procurement.

"OPA finds that good cause was not shown and that issues significant to the procurement process do not exist in this appeal to justify OPA proceeding with considering the appeal as it was found to be received after the time limit…," Sablan said.

Theresita B. Baza, general manager of Bolis-R-Us Catering, filed an appealed with the Office of the Public Auditor after the Division of Procurement and Supply dismissed its bid protest.

The contract has been awarded to MJ Kitchenette & Catering, which is the second lowest bidder.

Baza maintained that her company was the only bidder that had complied with every requirement. On the other hand, she said, all other bidders were failed to submit at least one of the minimum requirements.

MJ Kitchenette, for instance, did not submit with its bid a valid business license, three-year Revenue and Taxation compliance letter, and a local preference certification, Baza said.

She also questioned the government's decision to terminate its previous contract within 24-hour notice and without a new contract.

Hot pepper festival winners

By RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN
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REPORTER

From *Katdun Pika* cooking to raw hot pepper eating, from hermit crab racing to cha-cha dancing, more than 50 people came out victorious at the two-day Tinian Hot Pepper Festival this past weekend.

The annual event, which featured a number of different competitions, drew in local guests and tourists.

Fourteen booths selling hot pepper products as well as arts and crafts participated in this year's festival but the one by Maggie San Nicholas was eventually declared the Best Booth in the booth competition. Hotspot came in second, while Fleming Hotel & Restaurant was named third.

The winning booths were judged based on originality, use of local materials, attractiveness, and adherence to the hot pepper theme.

At the first set of the hot pepper eating contest, Jay San Nicholas came in first; Napu Aldan, second; and Kulio Cabrera, third.

The winners of the second set were Melvin Crisostimo, first; Danny Lambert, second; and Eric San Nicholas, third.

Peter Villagomez wowed the judges at the Adult Karaoke Signing contest, followed by Rose Lazaro who came in second and Marian Roberts, who came in third.

Chloe Hofschneider grabbed the audience's attention with her winning piece at the Children's Karaoke Singing contest. Alicia Villagomez came in second while Alison Cruz came in third.

Melvin Crisostimo lured in most of the votes for his version of the local traditional dish, *Katdun Pika*. Rose Lazaro came in second, while Marciana Cruz came in third.

The Tinian's Men Volleyball Team nabbed first place at the beach volleyball competition. Team TDHC-Nepal grabbed second while Tinian High School settled for third.

Demitri and Jessilyn showed off their cha-cha dance techniques that earned them first place at the cha-cha competition. Arley and Dorshae came in second while Antonette and Evita placed third.

The festival competitions were all in good fun.

NMC students host accreditation forum today

To raise awareness about its accreditation progress, the Associated Students of NMC will be hosting an accreditation forum today, Feb. 21, 20087, from 11am to 12pm and a second forum from 6pm to 7pm. NMC president Dr. Carmen Fernandez will be leading the discussion and answering questions about accreditation.

All NMC students, parents, and community members are being invited to attend either forum to learn about NMC's effort to obtain accreditation reaffirmation.

In a statement issued yesterday, NMC said that soon after the show cause order was issued by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, the college management team "has been hard at work meeting with various college and community leaders to raise awareness about NMC's accreditation efforts and to formulate a plan to secure full accreditation."

The initial round of discussions involved NMC's management team and the NMC Board of Regents, whose members pledged their full support to the college's efforts to upgrade its accreditation.

Fernandez also presided over a Feb. 8, 2008 general assembly meeting attended by students, faculty, and staff. Fernandez stated, "NMC has already made significant strides to exceed the standards set by the accreditation commission. We will continue to build on that effort to ensure that we achieve accreditation reaffirmation in the next review."

On the same day, Fernandez was joined by Board of Regents acting chair Joey San Nicolas and regent Charles Cepeda to field questions from local media at a news briefing.

Gov. Benigno Fitial also voiced his support later in the day in a private meeting with Fernandez. During the meeting, Fitial emphasized his administration's commitment to assisting the college obtain full accreditation.

In separate meetings, House Speaker Arnold Palacios and Senate President Pete Reyes also assured Fernandez of their support.

On Wednesday, Feb. 13, 2008, Fernandez led a team of students, parents, staff, and faculty to address the House Committee on Health, Education, and Welfare, chaired by Rep. Ralph Torres. During the meeting, the NMC team delivered a presentation that highlighted the college's accreditation status, priorities and budgetary needs. The discussion also covered specific details about the accrediting commission's concerns and NMC's progress in resolving them.

Faculty members have also been taking an active role in addressing accreditation concerns. Many attend weekly workshops facilitated by NMC's School of Education on issues such as developing student learning outcomes, rubrics, and other topics focused on improving teaching and learning. Faculty members also actively participate in the Program Review and Outcomes Assessment Committee.

Dr. Debra T. Cabrera, acting Dean of Academic Programs and Services, now chairs the Academic Council, where accreditation concerns and issues from the faculty's perspective are regularly discussed. She also led a faculty assembly on Feb. 15, 2008, to address faculty's role and responsibility in assisting with the collection and analysis of student achievement data for use in program review.

While accreditation-related activities on campus have stepped up to meet deadlines set by ACCJC, the college has received several statements and letters of support that have poured in from many sources, including parents, the Office of the Resident Representative to Washington DC, Taotao Tano CNMI, Pacific Post-Secondary Education Council, and others. ***(NMC)***

Hillblom claimant wants lawsuit moved to fed court

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

A New York-based woman who claimed to have two children fathered by the late multi-millionaire Larry L. Hillblom wants to transfer her lawsuit from the CNMI Superior Court to the federal court.

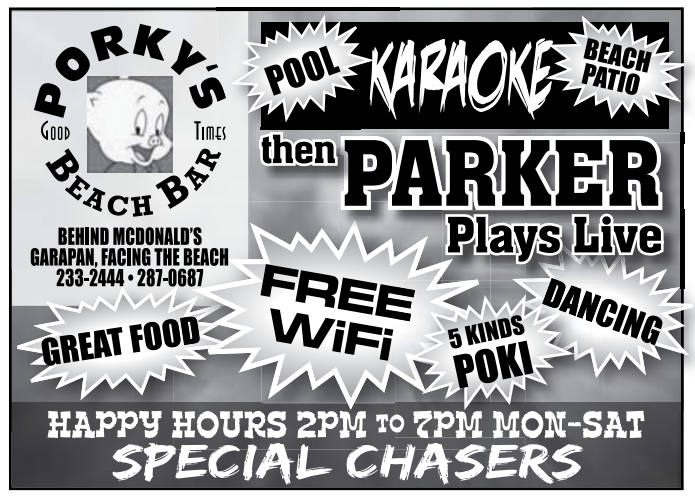
Sally Bauer filed yesterday a notice of removal of her case from the Superior Court to the U.S. District Court for the NMI.

In the notice she filed without a lawyer, Bauer explained that she wants the case transferred due to the recent Superior Court order that suspended her lawyer, Antonio M. Atalig, from practicing law in the local courts.

The Hillblom heir claimant asserted that the Superior Court's suspension order negatively affects and infringes upon and violates her federally protected rights—her capacity as guardian to her two children as to property and financial rights over Hillblom's remaining assets.

Superior Court Associate Judge Kenneth Govendo suspended Atalig and attorney

See HILLBLOM on Next Page



"I flew to Saipan to have my cataract surgery"
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Micronesian firefighters undergo advanced training

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Aircraft firefighters from Micronesian islands and Guam are presently on Saipan for a one-week advanced aircraft rescue fire fighting training.

Fourteen off-island aircraft firefighters—two from Palau, four from Guam, four from Pohnpei, three from Marshall Islands, and one from Chuuk—joined the training initiated by the Commonwealth Ports Authority.

Four firefighters from the CNMI Department of Public Safety also participated in the program that started Monday and will be completed tomorrow, Friday.

CPA Aircraft Rescue Fire Fighting chief James Diaz told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday that they are training participants on aircraft emergency incidents such as engine fire rescue operations, fire fighting operations and mass disaster care.

"This advanced course is to prepare them in case there is an actual aircraft incident. This is where we take them to the edge of the actual response, how to respond to an actual incident," Diaz said.

He said they allow the firefighters to see the whole scope of an actual aircraft rescue incident.

"We also take them to the limit. We take them to their physical limit. They go through a rigorous rescue operation," Diaz said.

Yesterday afternoon's scenario was a fire at the plane's engine where the trainees extinguished the blaze and proceeded to the interior to rescue the passengers.

"They go inside the aircraft. Inside are four dummies, each one weighing about almost 180 to 200 lbs. They are going in there and rescuing the dummies out," said Diaz.

Bill E. Edward of Pohnpei said it was hot yesterday, but they're learning a lot.

"We're trying to go beyond our limits right now," Edward said.

Herman Alfonso of Palau said that even though the training is tough, it is good for them to learn advanced skills.

"It's advanced so it's a little bit higher than the last time we came. The training makes us better," Alfonso said.

US CANCER

From Page 1

The cancer death rate among the overall population continued to fall, but only slightly, after a couple of years of more dramatic decline.

In 2005, there were just under 184 cancer deaths per 100,000 people, down from nearly 186 the previous year. Experts said it wasn't surprising that the rate would stabilize.

The cancer death rate has been dropping since the early 1990s, and early in this decade was declining by about 1 percent a year. The actual number of cancer deaths kept rising, however, because of the growing population.

So it was big news when the rate dropped by 2 percent in both 2003 and 2004, enough to cause the total number of cancer deaths to fall for the first time since 1930.

President Bush and others hailed that as a sign that federally funded research was making strides against the disease.

But now the death rate decline is back to 1 percent. And the 2005 numbers show annual cancer deaths are no longer falling, but are up more than 5,400 since 2004.

"The declining rate was no longer great enough to overcome the increase in population," said Elizabeth Ward, a co-author of the cancer society report

Officials with the organization say they don't know why the decline in the death rate eased.

It may be that cancer screenings are not having as big an effect as they were a few years ago, said Dr. Peter Ravdin, a research professor in biostatistics at the University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center in Houston.

One possible example: In 2004, the largest drop in deaths among the major cancers was in colorectal cancer. Experts gave much of the credit to colonoscopy screenings that detect polyps and allow doctors to remove them before they turn cancerous. They also mentioned "the Katie Couric effect"—a jump in colonoscopy rates after the "Today" show host had the exam on national television in 2000.

In the new report, the colorectal cancer death rate decreased by about 3 percent from 2004 to 2005, after plunging 6 percent from 2003 to 2004.

Colorectal cancer screening rates through 2003 did not show a decline.

FUREY

From Page 1

from the Board of Regents after six years of being a member.

NMC president Dr. Carmen Fernandez and Board of Regents chair Joey San Nicholas also refused to comment on Furey's decision to resign.

Press secretary Charles P. Reyes Jr. confirmed the governor's receipt of Furey's resignation letter and said it is deemed accepted.

Although the governor appoints Board of Regents members, Reyes explained that the governor's acceptance of a member's resignation is not needed since NMC is an independent and autonomous agency.

"This is just a courtesy since the NMC Board of Regents does not report to the governor or fall under his authority," Reyes said.

"The administration respects Ms. Furey's decision and thanks her for her service to NMC. We wish her well," added Reyes.

Furey's husband, John Furey, was a marine biologist at the college up until his contract ended a few months ago.

This comes at a time when the college is facing an accreditation crisis, with the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges giving NMC six months to explain why its accreditation should not be withdrawn.

The college has been on probation since last year. Among other reasons, the commission cited the high turnover rate of officials at the college, including its president.

NMC is governed by the Board of Regents whose members are appointed by the governor, with the advice and consent of the Senate.

The authority of the Board is derived from the Commonwealth Constitution and statutes.

Members are responsible for ensuring that the college accomplishes its mission of providing quality educational programs and services to the community. The decisions they make are focused on the needs of the community and the best interest of the students.

HILLBLOM

From Page 3

Reynaldo Yana from practicing law in the local courts in connection with the Angel Malite estate probate. The CNMI Supreme Court has stopped the suspension.

Bauer said she has made extensive attempts over the past few years to retain several attorneys, including Bruce Jorgensen, to represent her in federal court.

She said Jorgensen has tentatively agreed to provide her legal representation in federal court, but not in the CNMI Judiciary.

In her petition filed in the Superior Court, Bauer, her 18-year-old son Christopher and a minor daughter, asked the court to appoint a new special administrator for the purpose of administering their heirship claims and their entitlement to the estate's $30 million insurance policy.

The Bauers, through attorney Atalig and attorney Robert H. Myers Jr., asserted they are not after the already distributed Hillblom assets but are only after the $30 million insurance policy that the estate purchased.

Bauer apparently became aware that Hillblom may have been the father of her two children when she watched a Dateline TV program about Hillblom.

The Larry L. Hillblom Foundation Inc. has objected to the re-opening of the Hillblom estate as requested by Bauer.

Hillblom was the founder of DHL, the world's largest courier delivery service. He was the H in DHL. He died during a plane crash off Anatahan waters on May 21, 1995. He left an estimated $600 million to $700 million assets.

A total of eight women, including Bauer, claimed to have children from Hillblom. Of the 11 children from these eight women, only four were reportedly Hillblom's DNA-proven children.

COHEN

From Page 1

"In nearly six years as the U.S. government's point person for the Pacific, I worked closely with business and government leaders to drive investment to the islands and create new opportunities for the people living there," Cohen said in a statement.

"I am delighted to be able to continue that work with DWT Pacific, albeit from a different vantage point. We have the right people and the right structure to really add value for companies doing business all across the Pacific," added Cohen, who will be based in DWT's Los Angeles office.

Cohen will head the Pacific team, along with DWT senior partner Craig Miller and John Ridgway, managing partner of PLN Lawyers, Sydney, Australia.

As part of the venture, DWT and PLN will enter into a joint venture and Miller will move from Seattle to Sydney and office with PLN. PLN now provides coordinated legal and business advisory service to corporate Australian and international clients operating across Australia and the Pacific.

More than 20 lawyers with considerable experience in Asia-Pacific legal and business representation, drawn from DWT's U.S. and Shanghai offices and from PLN, will be actively engaged in DWT Pacific.

"With one phone call, companies around the world can now get the help they need across the entire Pacific," said DWT managing partner Dave Baca. "This is new, valuable and, I think, unmatchable. We are closely linking our U.S. and Shanghai offices with our partner in Australia. Adding David Cohen, who was the U.S. representative to the Pacific community, and the PLN offices in the Pacific provides a unified service platform for clients throughout the Pacific."

DWT noted that the Pacific is seeing substantial new investment, most notably on Guam, which is preparing to become the new home for military personnel currently based in Okinawa. The planned military buildup is expected to bring up to $15 billion of government defense expenditures to Guam and increase the island's population by more than 25 percent.

DWT said the military transfer to Guam will trigger major opportunities in civilian infrastructure development, finance, commerce, transportation, real estate development, health care, services and many other areas. Elsewhere in the Pacific, resort developers, banks, telecommunications companies and others are actively building new facilities and acquiring existing providers.

"DWT Pacific gives us the opportunity to expand and enhance what we have been doing for some time," said Ridgway. "We can now work with David Cohen and the DWT U.S./China offices to provide excellent, locally-knowledgeable service in the U.S., China, Australia and everything in between. DWT Pacific has been launched to serve the growing multi-jurisdictional needs of our major clients and targets."

The DWT Pacific team will offer full-service representation with a particular focus on those areas most relevant to the Pacific region's economic growth—construction, infrastructure, financial services, telecommunications, energy, tourism, hospitality, environment, and general corporate transactions.

Davis Wright Tremaine LLP is a business, litigation and regulatory law firm with approximately 500 attorneys in nine offices: Seattle and Bellevue (Wash.), Portland (Ore.), Los Angeles, San Francisco, New York, Washington, D.C., Anchorage (Alaska) and Shanghai, China.

NO MASS

From Page 1

hired," Villagomez said.

He also clarified that the governor's budget proposal was balanced when first submitted in September of 2007. It only became unbalanced because the Legislature failed to quickly enact the provisions, including the unpaid holiday proposal and the recommended retirement fund contribution rate.

The administration originally proposed to spend $168.771 million in FY2008. The proposed expenditures was to be supported by $160.1 million in General Fund resources, $5.171 million in Compact Impact funding, and $3.5 million in funds outside of General Fund sources (the same funds identified in Public Law 15-71).

The $160.1 million transmitted by the governor two days after the budget submission was for the identification of General Fund resources and not another budget, as purported by House Ways and Means Committee chair Ray N. Yumul.

Villagomez also refuted the claim that the governor's proposed FY08 budget was complicated by what Rep. Tina Sablan called "problematic assumptions."

"The proposed budget was not problematic but specific as to the amount to be spent, the funds identified to support the proposed expenditures, and what cost cutting and other measures were necessary to balance the budget," he said.

He noted that the governor's submission included detailed expenditure worksheets that specified full time employees to be funded and proposed expenditures. Each expenditure worksheets had actual expense data for each business unit starting from FY 2005, FY 2006, and expenditures to date for FY 2007.

Detailed expenditure worksheets were also included in the budget submission for each business unit. In addition, the Office of Management and Budget's proposed funding was $327,000, not $1 million, as claimed by one of the legislators.

Due to limited resources, the governor proposed that "all others funding" would be consolidated in the office of the most senior expenditure authority of a department. For the Office of the Governor, such expenditure authority for "all others" funding would be consolidated in the administrative services office headed by the special assistant for administration. At the Department of Labor, "all others" expenditures for the department would be controlled by the Labor secretary.

Villagomez urged the Legislature "to take the time to read and understand the governor's proposed budget."

The governor's budget was submitted on Sept. 10, 2007. To date, the Legislature has taken no decisive action on the proposal. The government is now midway through the second quarter of the fiscal year.

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Commonwealth I Sankattan Siha Na Islas Mariana
Ofisinan I Gubietno
Dipåttamenton I Tano' Pupbliku

NOTISIAN PRINIPONEN ATKILON TÅNO' PUBLIKU

Segun i Lai Publiku 15-2, I Dipåttamenton Tano' Publiku man-nånå'i' notisia pot i intension para ma'atkilan tano' publiku giya Saipan, Commonwealth Sankatan siha na Islas Marianas. Maseha håye na petsona interesao, siña muna halom opinion, infotmasion, yan kinentra pot i mapropone na atkilon tano publiku. I mapropopone i sigiente siha.

i. Para uma`atkila tano' publiku madeskribe kumo i numiron propiadåt 003 A 11, konsisiste kuårentai-nuebe mit kuåttro sientos sinkuentai-nuebe metro (49,459) square meters, 003 A 20, ha konsisiste kuårentai-nuebe mit, kinientos tres (49,503) square meters, 003 A 19, ha konsisiste dies mit(10,000) square meters, mas o` menos ni gaige giya Marpi, Saipan. Kopian i lugåt i sitiu gaige gi Depåttamenton Tano' Publiku ni libre hao umina.

ii. I para u inatkila este na tano i Win DnC. Co., LTD, un koporasion gi CNMI. I kuetpon direktot siha i sigente: Youngjai Kim, Kwon Hee Lee, yan si Kwi Dong Woo.

I presidente yan treserun i koporasion si Youngjai Kim. I segundo presidente si Kwon Hee Lee; sekritåria si Kwi Dong Woo.

iii. Si Señor Youngjai Kim (Presidente yan Treseru), Kwon Hee Lee (segundon i Presidente) yan si Kwi Dong Woo (Sekritårio), munigosiu i kontratan atkilon.

iv. I para u inatkila i lugåt debi de u usa solamente para u håtsa ya u establesi un hotel yan ottro siha fasilidåt.

I mapropone na tiempon kontråtan atkilon para bente-siñko åños (25 yrs.), yan appottunidat ma-ekstiende para talo kinse åños (15 yrs.).

I mapropone na åpas atkilon gi sakkan durånten i tiempo sigun i mapega na presiu segun i balin i lugåt.

v. I kabåles na kopian i mapropone na kontråtan atkilon siña un chule gi ofisinan I Dipåttamenton Tano' Publiku, ni gaige gi mina dos na bibienda gi Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, giya Saipan, mina dos bibienda gi Bank of Saipan Commercial Building giya Luta, fine'nina na bibienda gi Kings Commercial Building giya Tinian.

vi. Taya otro propositu guaha pot kontråtan atkilon tano publiko ni tineteka iya Marpi, Saipan.

vii. I Sekretarion Dipåttamenton Tano' Publiku siempre hu aksepta tinige' opinion, mensåhen kinentra yan testimonio osino otro siha na propositu ginen i man-interesao na petsona åntes de Matsu 6, 2008 gi Ofisinan Dipåttamenton Tano' Publiku siha ni gaige giya Saipan, Tinian yan Luta.

ARONGORONG REEL POMWOL AKKILONUL FALÚWEER TOULAP

Sángi Tálil 106 (b) mellól Alléghúl Toulap ye 15-2, Bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap ekke atotoowow ammataf igha ebwe akkilaaló eghús falúw mellól Seipél, Commonwealth Téél Falúwasch Marianas. Schóókka eyoor máfiyeer rebwe isisilong ischil mángámangiir, aweewe, aingiingil reel pomwol akkilonul ammwelil falúweer toulap. Me bwal Alléghúl Toulap ye 15-2, e ayoora, lamal aweewe kka rebwe mweiti ngali milikka ebwe akkatééló.

i. Pomwol akkilonul falúweer toulap ekke bwáári Lot No. 003 A 11, eyoor faigh me tiwow sangaras fabwughuw limeigh me tiwow llapal (49,459 square meters), elap me ngáre eghús, Lot No. 003 A 19, faigh me tiwoow sangaras, lima bwughuw elluw (49,503) sq. meters llapal, elap me ngare eghuus, me Lot No. 003 A 20,, seigh sangaras (10,000) sq. meters, llapal, elap me eghus, elo Máschepi, Seipél. Tilighial bwuley yeel nge eyoor llól Bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap (Public Lands) ngare óubwe ghuley fischiy.

ii. Schéschéél schóól akkilon nge Win DnC Co., LTD., corporation. Schóól Assamwoolul mwiisch (board of directors) mellol corporation nge Youngjai Kim, Kwon Hee Lee me Kwidong Woo.

Samwoolul (President me Treasurer) corporation nge Youngjai Kim. Vice President nge Kwon Hee Lee. Sekkretório nge Kwidong Woo.

iii. Schóól aweweel akkilon nge Youngjai Kim(Samwoolul me Treasurer), Kwon Hee Lee (Vice President) me Kwidong Woo (Sekkretório) corporation yeel.

iv. Schóól akkilon ebwe yááyá bwuley ngali schagh akkayul hotel me akkaw iimw kka a fillong.

Tool aighúghúl pomwol akkilon ebwe ruweigh me limwoow ráágh (25 years), emmwel rebwe sóbweey ngáli bwal seigh me limwoow ráágh (15 years).

Pomwol akkilon ebwe mwir sángi llapal méél falúw (value of the property).

v. Emmwel óubwe bwughil tilighial akkilon mellól bwulasiyool ammwelil falúweer toulap, elo aruwowal pwó(2nd floor) me Joeten Dandan Commercial Building llól Dandan, Seipél; aruwowal pwó (2nd floor) mellól Bank of Saipan Commercial Buiding, Luuta; me ngáre mmwal pwó (1st floor) mellól Kings Commercial Building, Tchúlúyól.

vi. Bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap nge esáál bweibwogh mwo akkááw pomwol akkilon yeel me Máschepi, Seipél.

vii. Samwoolul Bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap ebwe bwughil aweewe kkaal, aingiingil, mereer amweyút aramas mmwal schagh Ghúúw(Móózo) 6, 2007 mellól Depattamentool Bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap iye elo Seipél, Luuta me Tchúlúyól..

NOTICE OF PROPOSED LEASE OF PUBLIC LAND

In accordance with Section 106 (b) of Public Law 15-2, the Department of Public Lands hereby gives notice of its intent to lease certain public lands in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Any interested parties of the general public may submit comments, data, views, or arguments of alternative proposals for the lease of the public land. As further provided by Public Law 15-2, the following pertinent information is required to be published.

i. The proposed lease of public land is described as Lot No. 003 A 11, containing an area of approximately 49,459 square meters, more or less, Lot No. 003 A 19, containing an area of approximately 49,503 square meters, more or less, and Lot No. 003 A 20, containing an area of approximately 10,000 square meters, situated in Marpi, Saipan. A copy of the location of the parcel is available at the Department of Public Lands for inspection.

ii. The prospective lessee is Win DnC Co., LTD., a CNMI corporation. The board of directors of the corporation are Youngjai Kim, Kwon Hee Lee, and Kwidong Woo.

The president and treasurer of the corporation is Youngjai Kim. The vice president is Kwon Hee Lee. The secretary is Kwidong Woo.

iii. The proposed lease was negotiated by Mr. Youngjai Kim, Mr. Kwon Hee Lee, and Mr. Kwidong Woo, president/treasurer, vice president, and secretary, respectively, of the corporation.

iv. The lessee shall use the premises solely for the purpose of constructing and developing a hotel and related facilities.

The term of the proposed lease agreement is 25 years, with an option to extend the lease for an additional 15 years.

The proposed annual rental during the term is based on a percentage of the appraised fair market value of the property.

v. A copy of the proposed lease agreement may be obtained at the office of the Department of Public Lands, located on the 2nd floor of the Joeten Dandan Commercial Building in Dandan, Saipan; the 2nd floor of the Bank of Saipan Commercial Building, Rota; or the 1st floor of the Kings Commercial Building, Tinian.

vi. The Department of Public Lands has received no alternative proposals to lease the subject public land in Lower Base, Saipan.

vii. The Secretary of the Department of Public Lands shall accept written comments, views, arguments or alternative proposals from interested parties on or before March 6, 2008 at the Department of Public Lands offices located in Saipan, Rota or Tinian.

6 alleged overstaying aliens facing deportation charges

The Division of Immigration has filed deportation cases against six alleged overstaying aliens who mostly long-time workers in the CNMI.

With the filing of the cases, Superior Court associate judge David A. Wiseman ordered the six respondents to appear in court on March 13 at 1:30pm to explain why they should not be deported from the Commonwealth.

Named respondents were Marietta E. Alcantara, Qingyun Li, Gil L. Sobreviga, Gavidioso Satinitigan, Lingling Cheng, and Agnes M. Kohumoentini.

Immigration inspector Abram C. Togawa said Alcantara's nonresident work permit expired on March 11, 2007. Alcantara, a Filipino, has no pending Labor case, Togawa said.

Alcantara used to be a fast food worker. She has been in the CNMI since 1996 as a sales person and one time as a houseworker.

With respect to Li, the Immigration agent said that his nonresident work permit expired on Sept. 12, 2006 and that he has no pending Labor case.

Li, a Chinese carpenter, has been working in the CNMI since 1996.

In Sobreviga's case, Immigration said his nonresident work permit expired on Feb. 10, 2007. Sobreviga, a Filipino, is a construction worker. He used to be a maintenance worker and has been in the CNMI since 1996.

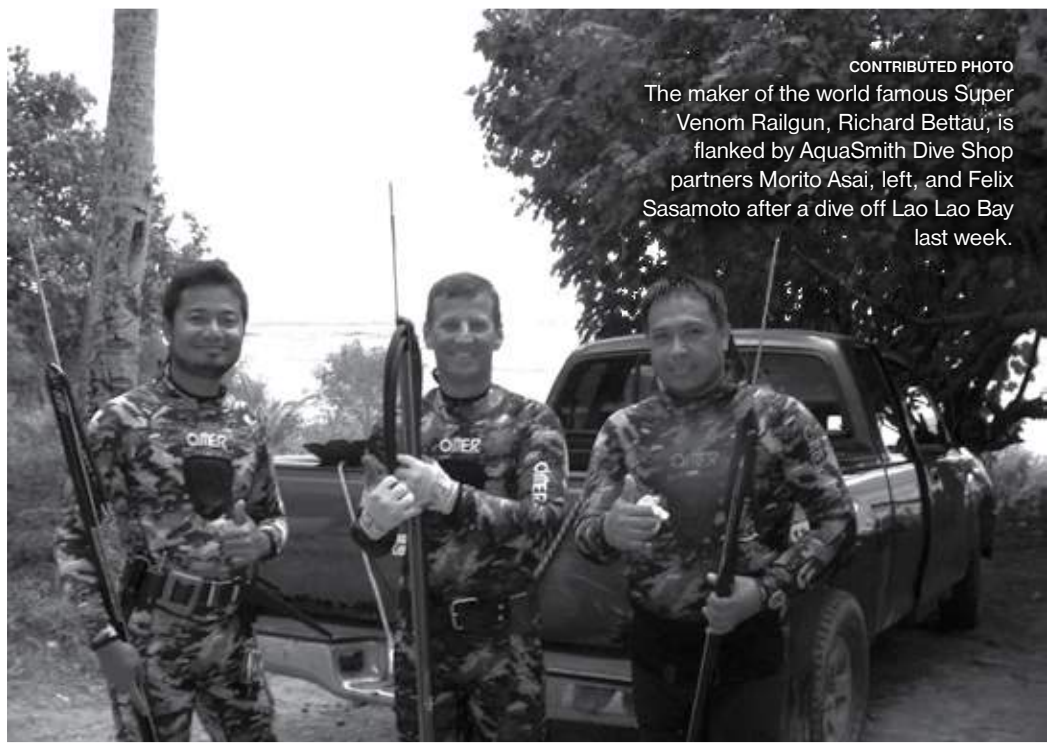
In Satinitigan's case, Immigration found out that his nonresident work permit expired on Sept. 28, 2004. Satinitigan, a Filipino carpenter, has been in the CNMI since 1997, Immigration records show.

With respect to Cheng, Immigration said she arrived on Saipan from China on a short-term tourist permit that expired on Dec. 27, 2007.

In Kohumoentini's case, Immigration said the respondent is from the Republic of the French Polynesia who entered the CNMI on a short-term tourist entry status on Aug. 10, 2006. Kohumoentini was authorized by the Immigration authority to stay only until Sept. 9, 2006.

An Immigration investigator said he received numerous calls that Kohumoentini has overstayed here for one year and five months now. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

Aimrite wants to sell spearguns here



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
The maker of the world famous Super Venom Railgun, Richard Bettau, is flanked by AquaSmith Dive Shop partners Morito Asai, left, and Felix Sasamoto after a dive off Lao Lao Bay last week.

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSISTANT EDITOR

The maker of the world-famous Super Venom Railgun visited Saipan this past week and is looking at distributing his products on Saipan through local speargun shop AquaSmith Dive Shop.

Richard Bettau, a former U.S. Navy masters chief, master diver, and owner of Aimrite Hawaii Inc., said he is looking at the possibility of selling his high-end railguns in the Commonwealth.

The company manufactures some of the best spearguns in the world. Its Super Venom Railgun, for instance, uses a carbon fiber and kevlar barrel that boasts a wall thickness of over 0.125 inches.

According to the Aimrite's website, the barrel provides a bit more weight to compensate for the additional recoil of shooting larger guns with 7.5mm (.300") shafts.

Other top-of-the-line spearguns of the company are its Hawaiian Railgun, its Carbon Fiber Hawaiian Railgun, and Aluminum Railgun products.

Aimrite's Hawaiian Railgun is based on the lightweight and maneuverable European-style spearguns, which are used by a majority of the world's competition spearfishermen. The concept behind this style of gun is to provide a more "line-of-sight" style of shooting as well as an extended reach and a thin, lightning fast shaft.

The Carbon Fiber Hawaiian Railgun, meanwhile, was designed to accommodate heavier bands while firing the more rigid spring steel European-style shafts built exclusively by Rob Allen of South Africa for Aimrite Hawaii.

The Aluminum Railgun, for its part, was designed as a no-nonsense, low cost alternative to the popular carbon fiber model railguns.

Last week, Bettau met with AquaSmith Dive Shop partners Morito Asai and Felix Sasamoto to discuss the possibility of distributing Aimrite Hawaii railguns on Saipan.

As a token of good faith, Bettau gave the two the company's world famous buoys that help ships navigating in the water know where spearfishermen are.

Asai and Sasamoto also treated their friend to a tour of Saipan's well-known spearfishing sites. Bettau said they went into the waters off Laolao Bay in Kagman.

Bettau said that, although it was tough to spearfish in that area, he was able to marvel at the island's abundant sea life.

Before coming to Saipan, Bettau worked for the U.S. Navy for 30 years. He is also an accomplished spearfisherman like Sasamoto and has been throughout the Pacific.

On Sasamoto's controversial Napoleon wrasse catch a couple of weeks back, Bettau said his new friend is quite an accomplished fisherman; since it's not only hard to free dive that deep (about 40 feet), the species of fish he caught is also quite a formidable opponent in daytime.

Woman gets five months for 'ice' possession

Superior Court Associate Judge Ramona V. Manglona imposed yesterday a five-month prison term on a woman who pleaded guilty to one count of possession of less than a gram of crystal methamphetamine or "ice."

Manglona sentenced Xia Tang alias Mimi to five years in prison, all suspended except for five months. Following a plea agreement, Manglona gave Tang credit for the time she has already served in jail. The defendant will be released from the Department of Corrections on March 5, 2008.

She will be placed on five years probation and required to cooperate in giving information about drug trafficking activities to law enforcers.

Manglona ordered Tang to pay $100 in court assessment fee and directed her to voluntarily leave the CNMI at her own expense within one month after her release from prison.

Tang, a Chinese, was charged in October 2007 with two counts of trafficking of a controlled substance and three counts of illegal possession of a controlled substance. She pleaded guilty to one count of possession of a controlled substance.

Tang was found in possession of less than a gram of "ice" on Oct. 4, 2007. Joint enforcement agencies arrested the 37-year-old Tang during a raid at her apartment room in Garapan.

According to a detective in a report filed in court, members of the Department of Public Safety's Special Investigation Section, Drug Enforcement Task Force, and Drug Enforcement Administration used a "cooperating defendant" to purchase "ice" from Tang at her apartment.

The detective said the "cooperating defendant" proceeded to the defendant's apartment room where he bought "ice" from her using $200 in marked money. The "cooperating defendant" went back later to the apartment and purchased more "ice" from Tang using $300 in marked money.

After a few minutes, the search team, including Customs K-9 Unit, raided the apartment on the strength of a search warrant.

Tang was later seen at the balcony of the three-story apartment throwing money down to the parking lot. Police later found out that the currencies that Tang threw were the marked money.

Tang had been convicted of prostitution before.

In other court news, the Superior Court imposed a one-year prison sentence on a man who burglarized a residence in Koblerville last year.

Associate Judge David A. Wiseman sentenced Christopher Hiroaki to three years in prison, all suspended, except for one year.

Hiroaki was given credit for the 19 days he had already served. He was ordered to report to the Department Of Corrections on March 17, 2008. His release will be on Feb. 27, 2009.

Wiseman said the defendant will be placed on two years probation. The judge also required Hiroaki to perform 150 hours of community work service and to pay a $500 fine and $25 court assessment fee, plus probation fee.

Hiroaki pleaded guilty to burglary on Tuesday.

In May 2007, Hiroaki and Weider Debengek and other suspects were arrested for allegedly burglarizing a residence in Koblerville on Apr. 25, 2007. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

NMC hosts accreditation forum today

As part of the Northern Marianas College's efforts to raise awareness about its accreditation progress, the Associated Students of NMC will be hosting an accreditation forum today, Feb. 21, 2008, from 11am to 12pm and a second forum from 6pm to 7pm. NMC president Dr. Carmen Fernandez will be leading the discussion and answering questions about accreditation.

Live-fire training at Farallon

The Emergency Management Office, in conjunction with U.S. Naval Forces Marianas Guam, said that the U.S. military would be conducting live-fire training on the island of Farallon De Mendenilla on Feb. 26 – 29, 2008, from 9am to 7pm.

The general location of this activity will be on the island of Farallon De Mendenilla training area on a 10 nautical-mile radius on all quadrants.

Due to the danger imposed by this activity, EMO is advising the public, especially fishermen, commercial pilots and marine tour operators, to stay away from this area during the time and dates indicated.

For more information, contact the MO's Operations Section at telephone numbers 322-9528 and 322-9529, VHF MARINE CHNL 16, and HF Single Side Band Radio on 5.205.0. ***(EMO)***

MCS Class of '88 meeting tomorrow

This is to inform the Class of 1988 of Our Lady of Mount Carmel High School that there will be a meeting tomorrow, Feb. 22, 2008, at the VFW Post 3457 at 6pm in Garapan to discuss upcoming events for the 20th class reunion. All classmates are encouraged to attend. For more information contact Angela at 287-6231 or Tami at 234-6442. ***(PR)***

MHS Class of '83 meeting

The MHS Class of 1983's 25th year reunion is fast approaching and event tickets are selling like hotcakes. Please come and join us at our next meeting on Friday, Feb. 29, 2008, at 6pm, at the Kilili Beach pavilion. See your committee memners for great deals on event tickets.

Contact any of the Steering Committee members for details: Tonnei Camacho, 483-9665; Viola Kaipat, 483-0214; Ed Camacho, 483-5262; Jane Tudela, 234-9571; Frances Mildred Cruz, 483-0995; Ester Teregeyo, 285-6284; Ben Sablan, 287-1480; or Diego Songsong, 287-4300. ***(PR)***

MHS Class of '88 meeting today

This is to inform the Class of 1988 of Marianas High School that there will be a meeting today, Feb. 21, 2008 at 7pm at the Kagman Community Center. This is to update plans on the upcoming 20th class reunion. All classmates are encouraged to attend this important meeting. For more information, contact Lillian Lizama Tudela at 287-3742 or Dennis Villagomez at 287-4689. ***(PR)***

LibDay booth concessions

The 2008 Liberation Day Committee is now accepting applications for the 2008 Liberation Day Carnival Grounds Booth Concessions. Interested individuals and/or firms may pick up an application at the Office of the Mayor of Saipan in the Afetnas Square in San Antonio. For more information, contact Concessions Committee chair Piding Tenorio at 287-8091. Deadline for submission of concession application is April 30, 2008 at the Saipan Mayor's Office. ***(PR)***

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Marianas Dive: Mission accomplished

As members of Marianas Dive descended upon the shores of Tinian for the annual hot pepper festival this past weekend, they were treated to amazing hospitality and incredible diving.

Currently the island has only four official dive sites marked with mooring buoys, yet according to the group's president, Mike Tripp, there are plenty of additional spots worthy of holding divers attention.

Tripp

"The three sites we visited with the help of Mr. Shin from Tinian Fun Diving were fabulous but they are in need of proper moorings not only to protect the reef from anchor damage but also to send a message to the world that there is plenty of great diving on Tinian."

One of the group's long-term goals is to bring a system of proper moorings to the island and ultimately make it a dive destination where divers stay more than a few days in order to take in all the island has to offer.

"We will be providing [Coral Reef Management] with the GPS coordinates for these 'new' sites and working closely with them in order to get the moorings installed as quickly as possible" said Tripp.

In addition to the exploratory dives, the group also conducted an underwater cleanup off of the festival beach, netting another tire and approximately 60 lbs of debris.

They also conducted a PADI Discover SCUBA course at the Tinian Dynasty Hotel and Casino for those who had never tried it before.

"I think given how warmly we were received during the festival this was the most exciting thing for us. It gave us the opportunity to give something back to the island and when you see the eyes of a kid light up as they take their first breath underwater, you know you've made a positive difference, especially if they become certified divers and help protect the reef for future generations," said Tripp.

Marianas Dive is a group of individuals with a passion for everything underwater and specifically what Saipan Tinian and Rota have to offer as dive destinations. The group welcomes community members to join and help the CNMI build a truly world class dive destination while promoting excellent diving locally and globally. Members meet twice monthly, with the next meeting tonight at Chambre Bar in the Fiesta Hotel at 6:30pm. Visit www.marianasdive.com for more information. ***(PR)***

Bordallo visits troops in Afghanistan

WASHINGTON, D.C. —Guam Rep. Madeleine Z. Bordallo returned to Washington, D.C. yesterday after a three-day fact finding mission to Afghanistan. The congressional delegation was led by Rep. Robert Andrews of New Jersey, and also included Rep. Scott Garrett of New Jersey and Rep. John Kline of Minnesota.

Bordallo

The congressional delegation met with ranking military officials to discuss progress made by Provincial Reconstruction Teams in rebuilding Afghanistan. The delegation also had the opportunity to meet first-hand with service-members embedded with the PRTs in various regions across the country.

U.S. Ambassador William B. Wood met with the delegation to update them on security matters and economic progress in Afghanistan. The group also met with Gen. Daniel K. McNeill, U.S. Army, commander of the International Security Assistance Force, to discuss U.S. government efforts to obtain greater security force assistance from European members of NATO.

As she has done in the past, Bordallo was able to spread the "Guam" spirit to servicemen and women from Guam by distributing *guguria* and *donne' dinanche* to Guam soldiers and airmen deployed to Afghanistan. She met with men and women from Guam serving in Afghanistan and in Kuwait and Qatar when the delegation was in transit.

"We are proud of our men and women from Guam, particularly our Guam National Guardsmen who are serving multiple deployments in the theater of operations. They have been called to duty in Afghanistan because they bring unique skills that are important to the success of the provincial reconstruction teams," said Bordallo. "We look forward to the safe return of all our service-members serving our nation in many dangerous places around the world." ***(PR)***

DINNER RECEPTION

During his first personal trip to the nation's capital, Federated States of Micronesia President Emanuel Mori, third from left, welcomed friends to a dinner held at the FSM Embassy. Among those invited was CNMI Resident Representative Pete A. Tenorio, fourth from left. Flanking Mori and Tenorio in photo are staffers, from left, Walter Villagomez, Jody Abraham, Chai McDermott, Emet Saures, Ed Pangelinan and Office of Insular Affairs CNMI-Guam Desk Officer Frank Taitano.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Applications open for teacher scholarships

Pacific Resources for Education and Learning announced yesterday its acceptance of applications for the annual Pacific Teacher Scholarships.

PREL created the scholarship fund in 2004 in an effort to increase the number of qualified teachers working in the U.S.-affiliated Pacific. Twenty-three aspiring teachers in the region have already been awarded scholarships.

Scholarships ranging in amounts from $750 to $1,000 are awarded to students who will be in their second, third, or fourth year of study in an accredited teacher preparation program. Applicants must reside in American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Guam, Marshall Islands, or Palau, and intend to teach in a public school in the U.S.-affiliated Pacific.

To apply for a Pacific Teacher Scholarship for the 2008–2009 school year, contact your local PREL service center at *www.prel.org/contactPREL.aspx* or visit PREL's Pacific Teacher Scholarship web page at *www.prel.org/opportunities/pacific-teacher-scholarship.asp*, where the application form and instructions on how to apply are listed. All application materials must be received at your local PREL service center or the Honolulu office by April 1, 2008.

PREL (*www.prel.org)* is an independent, nonprofit 501 (c) (3) corporation that works in partnership with the Pacific educational community to provide quality programs and products developed to promote educational excellence, including professional development and educational materials.

In addition, PREL administers the Regional Educational Laboratory Pacific, one of 10 Regional Educational Laboratories funded through the Institute of Education Sciences of the U.S. Department of Education.

PREL serves the U.S.-affiliated Pacific islands, including American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia (Chuuk, Kosrae, Pohnpei, and Yap), Guam, Hawaii, the Republic of Palau, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands. ***(PREL)***

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

February 21, 2001

Finance told to produce missing tobacco money

The absence of available money due to the missing tobacco settlement funds yesterday forced lawmakers to delay action on the proposed creation of the Tobacco Prevention and Control Advisory Board. The finance department came under fire during the public hearing at the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare following the discovery that the initial $815,000 tobacco settlement was diverted to CNMI general funds.

Asian economic slowdown may hamper efforts to lure investors

Current economic conditions in major Asian countries may hamper efforts by the administration of Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio to lure more foreign investors into the proposed Northern Marianas Free Trade Zone. While Mr. Tenorio said a group of investors from Taipei has expressed interest in putting up investments here, he admitted that majority of businessmen were a little reluctant in branching out of Taiwan due to the regional economic slowdown.

Legislature pressed to identify health funds

Department of Public Health officials yesterday urged the Legislature to identify funding sources to maximize the utilization of Medicaid benefits of health patients in Northern Marianas. Health Secretary Joseph Kevin Villagomez said the department will be able to get needed matching funds from the federal government once alternative sources of funds are identified.

February 21, 2002

Customs revenue drops 27 percent

For the fourth month in a row, customs collection fell in January, this time by a whopping 27 percent when compared to the same period last year. Although collection figures from October 2001 to January 2002 showed no appreciable differences between them-averaging at $4.31 million a month-the same figures show a marked drop when compared to the collection figures of Fiscal Year 2000-2001, covering the same period.

PCB machine left 3 workers burned

Three workers were burned by hot dust while doing maintenance work on the indirect thermal desorption machine in Tanapag. One of the workers-a Filipino-remained at the local hospital's intensive care unit as of press time. Twenty-nine-year-old Roberto Alazar was burned in more than half of his body, and was constantly being sedated at the Commonwealth Health Center to keep him from moving and feeling the pain. Doctors exert efforts to prevent bacteria from developing on his injuries, said the US Army Corps of Engineers.

Remittances reach $76M in 2001

The volume of greenback that flowed out of the Northern Marianas last year reached more than $76 million, with remittances to the Philippines representing the biggest bulk of the money transfer transactions recorded by the CNMI Department of Commerce. A comprehensive report obtained from the commerce department's Banking Division indicated a flourishing money transfer business in the CNMI, as remittances during the period covering January-December 2002 totaled $76,687,693.

February 21, 2003

ARFF looks into threats of bio weapons

What if a terrorist attacks a commercial airplane in the CNMI using a biochemical weapon? With that scenario in mind, the Commonwealth Ports Authority's Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting unit has laid down an emergency plan that would save the lives of people aboard the plane during such a potential attack.

Is the Commonwealth ready?

Amid brewing conflict between the U.S. and Iraq and the heightened terrorist threat alert nationally, local residents expressed concern on how this would impact the Commonwealth. Telephone calls from some residents asked: Is the CNMI ready in case of a war? "We are on heightened alert," replied Mark Pangelinan, deputy director of the Emergency Management Office. "All the appropriate agencies are taking security measures right now."

JOETEN'S BEST BUYS OF THE WEEK!

February 21-27, 2008

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Opinion

Hafa Adai!
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EDITORIAL

Minimalist response to maximum trauma

A wave of recent school shootings, including the bloody attack in Illinois last week, is again prompting calls around the country for reforms. But in Virginia, where the bloodiest rampage of all took place last spring at Virginia Tech, the initial demands for legislative and regulatory improvements have yielded disappointing results. Other states that have grappled with senseless killings can now look to Richmond as an example—one not to emulate—of minimal response to maximum trauma.

The General Assembly's first failure was to leave open an outrageous loophole in state law that enables anyone, including ex-cons, escaped felons and those suffering from severe mental illnesses, to purchase firearms from private dealers at gun shows without undergoing a background check of any kind.

Never mind that most such checks in Virginia take a few minutes at most. That was still too much for the gun lobby, which called in its many chits in Richmond to kill legislation that would have closed the loophole. Virginia lawmakers not only left open the door for a potentially dangerous person to buy a weapon, they also thumbed their noses at many of the Virginia Tech victims' families, who had urged that the loophole be closed.

Legislators then turned their attention to the state's laws governing involuntary commitment, which are among the most restrictive in the nation. Some lawmakers had paid lip service to relaxing the commitment standard so that sick individuals who do not necessarily pose an "imminent danger" to themselves or others could be detained for treatment. Other states have adopted more flexible standards under which people can be detained who are likely to become dangerous if not treated, or whose condition is rapidly deteriorating, or who are incapable of making rational decisions about their treatment. The effect of those reforms is to provide treatment to people before they are in extreme crisis—in other words, before it may be too late.

Rather than adopting one of those reforms, however, Virginia lawmakers seem likely to make what amounts to little more than a cosmetic change in the standard for involuntary commitment. In keeping with a modest recommendation by the state Chief Justice's Commission on Mental Health Reform, legislation now heading toward enactment would still bar detention unless there were a "substantial likelihood" that an individual would hurt himself or others in the near future. Other reforms, legislative and regulatory, go a little further toward tightening up the mental health system to ensure that sick people get the help they need as patients, and that background checks for weapons purchases—when they are done—screen out mental health patients. But the standard for involuntary commitment is the heart of the matter. And Virginia has flunked the test.

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Creating your vision

By RIK and JANEL VILLEGAS

Rik is a business instructor at NMC and Janel is a partner with BizResults, LLC (www.bizresults.org). They can be contacted at biz_results@yahoo.com.

A couple of weeks ago we discussed the importance of a positive vision of the future. In this article, we will elaborate on why it is a powerful motivator for personal and organizational change and ask some questions to help you effectively create your own vision statement.

Without aiming toward a definite purpose, your business or life will just pass time and be at the mercy of external forces. People within an organization will question the direction the company is headed and they may waste time and resources when there is no vision.

In 3,300 studies on leadership, researchers sought the common qualities that great leaders possessed. Vision was the one quality that all of the studies had in common. When you have a positive image of the future, you are like a navigator who follows a guiding star to lead yourself and organization toward a positive future reality.

Let's look at how a positive vision of the future can make a difference in your organization or personal life. The process is slanted toward creating a vision for your organization, but you can tailor the questions to help you discover your personal direction. The five steps all start with the letter "C": Clarity, Comprehensive, Compelling, Communication, and Commitment. Grab a pen and paper so you can answer some questions.

Clarity. You should specifically define what you want for your business, or as an individual. You get what you ask for, and if you don't know what to ask for, you are definitely not going to get it. If the vision is too vague, it will be difficult to focus on the destination. Be specific by imagining your future in rich detail, filled with feeling and emotion. Your picture should be so clear that it becomes tangible and empowering. Clarity allows you to know what you want and how you're going to get it. Here are some questions to help you focus on your vision: What specifically do I want for my life or organization? When will my business or career be complete? What will it look like and feel like when it is complete?

Comprehensive. Your vision must be detailed enough so everyone associated with the organization understands how they can participate and why their contribution is vital. The leader should initiate the process by gathering information and understanding the needs of those affected by the vision. Here are some questions to ask: How will I know when I've achieved all that I should? What limitations, roadblocks or obstacles did I need to overcome to pursue my vision? What will my customers, employees, co-workers, suppliers, shareholders, or loved ones get from the vision?

Compelling. With a clear and comprehensive vision, you must now ensure that it is compelling to all those involved with it. The more compelling your vision, the easier it will be to take the first steps. Ask yourself: What do I get from my business: recognition, money, prestige, satisfaction, self-fulfillment? How much of it will I get? Is it enough for those involved with the vision to want to give their continued support? Is the vision compelling enough to motivate others and me through any difficulties or pain that might need to be endured?

Communication. Your vision will be a powerful force for change, but only if it is communicated in a compelling way that inspires others to embrace your vision. Ask: Who do I need to communicate the vision to in order to get their support? How can the vision be communicated on a consistent basis so that it remains a top priority? How can I present the vision to others in a way that will inspire them?

Commitment. As a leader, you must gain commitment and support from your team to transform your vision into reality. As you share your vision, get agreement on the direction the organization will take. This is critical because when everyone agrees on the direction, every decision made by the organization can be measured against the vision's direction. Individuals will be more empowered to make decisions they know will move the organization in the right direction. Through persistent commitment, you'll be able to effectively attract the resources and people needed to fulfill your vision. Great leaders are individuals who have a vision and extraordinary commitment, which is what attracts us to them. Ask these questions: What would make me personally commit myself to this vision over the next few years? Am I truly committed to the vision in a way that encourages the commitment of others within the organization? Do all the external stakeholders in the organization understand and support the vision?

Now that you have answered the questions, it's time to put your vision into action. If you have a clear, compelling vision that is understood and communicated in a way where everyone feels valued, and is committed to the new direction, then you have a positive image of the future that creates excitement. Your vision will be manifest in the future as you live it today and every day.

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Letters to the Editor

Article 12 and the CNMI economy

Fixing the economy of the Commonwealth, as most of us know, is the key to solving the CNMI financial crisis. The government cannot provide essential public services without adequate funding. No matter how we look at it, the CNMI government cannot provide each agency or department the funding it needs if the CNMI government's revenue collection is not enough to adequately fund its needs. Government revenue generation in turn depends on the amount of economic activity going on in the CNMI. And as we all know economic activity has declined by at least 40 percent during the past 10 years. This translates into a 40 percent decline in revenue collection for the government. Such drastic decline has affected the entire operation of the CNMI government, including it independent agencies like NMC and PSS, CHC and CUC. Unless we address and tackle head-on the fundamental problems affecting the economy, it would be extremely difficult to fix our economy, so that we could generate the revenue needed to run our hospital, our schools, the college and the power plant. We simply cannot fix our economy, unless we first acknowledge that certain fundamental problems must first be addressed and resolved.

One of the fundamental problems that have a direct bearing on the health of our economy is the land ownership restriction under the NMI Constitution. Unless our land ownership law is either modified or liberalized in a manner that would entice investors (foreign and domestic) to invest in the CNMI, it would remain very difficult to attract new investors or to persuade existing investors to infuse more capital and upgrade their existing investments. The bottom line is that all investors want their investment to appreciate, not depreciate. Under a leasehold arrangement, as the lease-term gets shorter, the value of the investment depreciates. This is one of key the reasons why many existing investors are not eager to spend more money on improving their hotel, golf course and other business investments. Existing investors have little, if any, incentive to do so; and because of that, new investors are hesitant to come in and invest in the CNMI. We, therefore, need to do something about our land ownership law so that investors (existing and potential investors) would have the confidence they need to invest in the CNMI.

For the short term, it would be wise for the CNMI government to either pass a law or adopt a public policy with respect to public lands that are now being leased by investors, both indigenous and non-indigenous. That law or policy should require the Department of Public Lands to do a complete inventory of all public land leases; and for those investment-type of leases where the lease term remaining is, say, 20 years or less, DPL should approach each investor and offer the investor an entirely new lease term of 25 years, plus an option to renew for another 15 years. The Legislature, in turn, should establish a simple procedure for both houses to review and approve expeditiously any 15-year renewal option requested for the lease. DPL and the investor would, of course, have to first terminate the existing public land lease before entering into an entirely new one. The Legislature may also have to pass a law clarifying that a new lease is not an extension of the previous lease that has been terminated, which is a present concern of existing investors.

For the long term, the CNMI government should immediately begin a serious examination and review of the constitutional restriction on land ownership. The basic intent of the land ownership restriction, as we all know, is to ensure that the indigenous people of the CNMI would not become landless in their own islands. Like most good intentions, however, there have been problems with the basic law (Article 12) which implemented the land ownership restriction. Article 12 was drafted in 1976 with a very broad, all-encompassing language. No exception was permitted under Article 12; and the sole remedy provided by Article 12 was for the court to declare any transaction violating Article 12 as void ab initio.

Like the huge purse-seine fishing nets that ply the oceans, Article 12 drew the land ownership restriction very broadly. It catches any and all fish that comes in its way, including those it does not want to catch and should not be catching. The Article 12 land ownership restriction was drafted in a manner that did not fully anticipate its adverse consequences and effect on a large segment of our community, on the economy of the CNMI, and on attracting investors. Had the constitutional convention delegates been aware of the divisive nature of the restriction on most members of our community, they would have provided for exceptions to the general rule with respect to land ownership.

More than 30 years have passed since Article 12 was adopted. Over the years, principally because the sole remedy permitted under Article 12 is to declare void ab initio a land transaction which violates the restriction, this law has left a very bitter taste on many people who were adversely affected by the restriction and the harsh remedy it allows. It has pitted, in very fierce legal battles, those who were (and are) of the opinion that land ownership should continue being in the hands of only those people who are of NMI descent (without any exception), and those who believe that the CNMI land ownership restriction (at least as to non-indigenous U.S. citizens) is discriminatory under the U.S. Constitution. Indeed, if the CNMI were one of the 50 states, Article 12 would clearly be declared unconstitutional because the right to own land is a fundamental provision of the U.S. Constitution in the 50 states.

For the CNMI, however, because it is not a state or "a territory destined for statehood," such fundamental provisions of the U.S. Constitution are not considered "fundamental" in the CNMI and does not have to be applicable here. The right to own land, the right to have a jury trial, and the constitutional requirement that both houses of the CNMI Legislature be apportioned based on population are several of these constitutional rights that were not made applicable to the CNMI under the NMI Covenant. Further, the U.S. Congress expressly agreed under the terms of the Covenant to limit its powers under the Territorial Clause of the U.S. Constitution with respect to the CNMI right to self-government. Other U.S territories, such as Guam, the Virgin Islands and American Samoa, are all subject to the "plenary powers" of Congress over the territories, pursuant to the Territorial Clause of the U.S. Constitution.

It is, therefore, up to the people of the CNMI to decide what to do with Article 12, after our 30-year experience with this law. After the year 2011, the people of the CNMI may choose to continue the land ownership restriction; or they may modify the restriction and make it less restrictive, practical and responsive to our needs, and more accommodating to the non-indigenous members of our community; or they may decide to do away completely with the land ownership restriction. These are the possible major choices, with possible variations as to each.

There is, of course, no guarantee that, if the land ownership restriction is modified or removed, investors would immediately flock to the CNMI to invest. But we cannot find this out until we try and make the CNMI an investor-friendly place. One way of doing this, I believe, is the need to review and liberalize our land ownership laws. It is my opinion that if we do not positively address the land ownership issue by 2011, the CNMI would continue encountering great difficulty in improving its economy. The reason for this is that our most scarce resource—land--is also the only resource we could offer investors to come and invest here.

We must also remember that, right now, our only viable industry is the visitor industry. Until there is a military base, say, on Tinian, or until the casino industry flourishes on Tinian, we do not have any second industry to replace the garment industry that has, for all practical purposes, moved out of the CNMI. Many of the key players in the visitor industry are foreign investors, who could obtain only a 55-year leasehold on privately-owned land and forty years on publicly-owned land. For those investors that have invested under this arrangement, many now find themselves with a lease term that is less than half of the original lease term.

The foregoing discussion is intended to start a serious dialogue on the land ownership restriction; it is not to urge the complete abolition of the Covenant objective that the indigenous people of the CNMI should not be put in the predicament of becoming landless in their own land. The original intent that the indigenous Chamorros and Carolinians should not end up being landless should be preserved. But that doesn't mean that other permanent, non- indigenous members of our community should not be accorded the right to also own land here after 2011. Our failure to do so would, I believe, result in and perpetuate a divided community.

What is the best way to accommodate all members of our community would be the subject of discussion and compromise under a public education program that a key legislator plans to introduce by legislation. The people of the CNMI would have to seriously consider this very critical social and economic issue, and must eventually decide where to re-draw the line on land ownership in the CNMI. For example, if a landowner has only one piece of property that, if sold, would make him landless, then there should be a restriction on purchasing his land. The irony is that he may still sell his property to an indigenous buyer, and he would then end up being landless. But this is an issue that should be discussed.

An example of amending the land ownership restriction relates to certain types of property, such as beach-front properties that are ideal for hotels and tourist-related businesses. A landowner should be allowed sell such property, if he wants to, to a foreign investor, provided he has another piece of property elsewhere to live on.

Another example of changing our land laws relates to certain major investment projects costing in excess of, say, $10 million. In this situation, the leasehold granted to the foreign investor could be, say, 99-years, if it is public land; so long as the property is not within the CNMI Government's land-use master plan for public purposes and needs, now and in the future.

Another possible change to our land tenure law is the Jose S. Dela Cruz idea of allowing non-indigenous members of our community to own a piece of property so they could build a house and establish permanent roots here. Why not?

A key member of the Legislature has indicated a plan to introduce legislation to establish a commission to do a study and public education program on the land ownership restriction issue. It is hoped that by the year 2011 we would have an idea as to how to proceed to accommodate the different interests of landowners, investors, and the economy of the CNMI after that date. The approach of such a commission should be both short-term and long-term. Short-term because the economy of the CNMI has to be jump-started immediately; and long-term because the CNMI must face head-on the land ownership problem that has divided our community over the years. If we are to have community with the overarching goal of improving the quality of life for everyone in the CNMI (indigenous, non-indigenous and investors), we must approach the land ownership issue with a view towards accommodating the concerns of all of segments of our community.

A long time ago, President Lincoln in his famous address at the Lincoln-Douglas Debate made a statement that we need to heed: "A house divided against itself cannot stand." If our small and fragile community is to prosper, we need to join hands and work together to make this community a peaceful and prosperous place to live in—for everyone.

Jose S. Dela Cruz
Navy Hill, Saipan

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'You cannot have it both ways'

Mr. McCue's attempts to invalidate entire letters through nitpicking are admirable. The United States is a nation of immigrants yearning for a better life. Are changes in law really that bad? Are CNMI laws that favor the government and business over the populace really beneficial to locals, or contract workers? If an H-1 worker comes to your hometown, establishes himself, and wants to change his status, are you opposed? Why, Mr. McCue, are you opposed to change?

Again, you cannot have it both ways. The CNMI cannot hold out a hand for federal dollars, and expect to maintain the local/business status quo. I would like to remind you, Mr. McCue, that unless you are a Native American, you are an immigrant as well, whose forefathers went through the exact same thing CNMI immigrant labor is going through now. As the most prosperous nation on the planet, I believe that everyone is welcome.

Paul Harsany
Garapan, Saipan

Sattelite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers. East winds 20 to 25 mph.	Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers. East winds 20 to 25 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲82° ▼75°	▲82° ▼75°	▲81° ▼73°	▲79° ▼74°	▲81° ▼74°

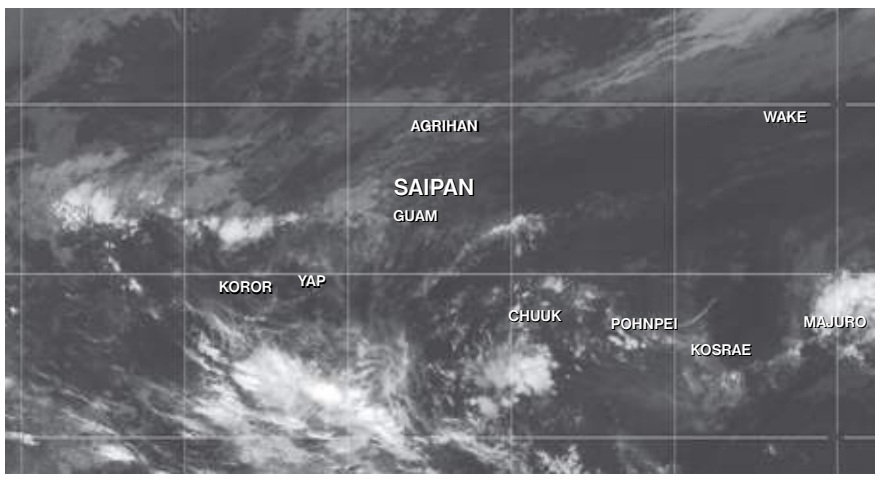
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Partly Sunny	▲83	▼74
Palau	Partly Sunny	▲88	▼77
Yap	Partly Sunny	▲88	▼77
Chuuk	Partly Sunny	▲89	▼79
Pohnpei	Partly Sunny	▲87	▼74
Kosrae	Partly Sunny	▲89	▼76
Majuro	Thunderstorms	▲82	▼75

Around The Globe

Auckland	Cloudy	▲72	▼59
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	▲49	▼28
Hong Kong	Partly Sunny	▲69	▼65
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	▲79	▼65
London	Cloudy	▲52	▼37
Los Angeles	Mostly Cloudy	▲63	▼52
Manila	Thunderstorms	▲79	▼73
Melbourne	Cloudy	▲76	▼61
Miami	Showers	▲84	▼72
New York	Mostly Sunny	▲32	▼25
Osaka	Sunny	▲47	▼36
Paris	Mostly Cloudy	▲53	▼42
Pusan	Mostly Sunny	▲52	▼37
Rome	Rain	▲53	▼43
Salem	Rain	▲50	▼35
San Francisco	Rain	▲56	▼50
Seoul	Sunny	▲43	▼23
Tokyo	Sunny	▲54	▼36
Washington, DC	Cloudy	▲38	▼28

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, WEDNESDAY, FEB. 20, 2008
Western North Pacific between Equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

An old shear line stretches southwestward from 20N180 to south of Wake island at 17N167E to near Guam at 12N145E. Patchy clouds with isolated to scattered showers are found along and up to 125 miles northwest of this boundary. Another shear line extends southwestward from 24N180 to north of Wake Island at 20N167E to north of Saipan at 16N146E to end at 12N132E. Extensive cloudiness with scattered showers and patchy rain are found along and northwest of this boundary to beyond 25N. A near-equatorial trough runs eastward from 1N130E to end at eq140E. Numerous showers and isolated thunderstorms associated with the trough are occurring south of Yap and Koror within 160 miles of a line from 5N130E to eq143E. A surface trough reaches northward from EQ152E to 9N151E. Low-level convergence associated with this trough is triggering scattered showers and a few thunderstorms over Chuuk and Pohnpei but south of Kosrae. This large area is within 150 miles of a line from EQ146E to 8N153E and then within 90 miles from 8N153E to 3N163E. A trade-wind disturbance is generating numerous showers and isolated thunderstorms over the Marshall Islands bounded by 4N164E to 11N170E to 7N180 to 5N180 and back to 4N164E.

Tides

Saipan Harbor		
01:54AM Today	Low Tide:	0.3 Feet
08:36AM Today	High Tide:	1.9 Feet
02:21PM Today	Low Tide:	0.9 Feet
07:33PM Today	High Tide:	1.9 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:39AM	6:22PM
Friday	6:39AM	6:23PM
Saturday	6:38AM	6:23PM
Sunday	6:38AM	6:23PM
Monday	6:37AM	6:24PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	06:30PM	06:30AM
Friday	07:21PM	07:08AM
Saturday	08:10PM	07:44AM
Sunday	08:59PM	08:20AM
Monday	09:48PM	08:55AM

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The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

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- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

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For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

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- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

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- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, CIC Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

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- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF FEBRUARY 15, 2008

DEPARTURES

Saipan-Rota			
CO 9313	8:30am	9:05am	3,4,7
Saipan-Guam			
CO9317	5:00am	5:50am	Daily
CO9597	8:30am	9:20am	1,2,5,6
CO9313	8:30am	10:00am	3,4,7 via Rota
CO9601	12:30pm	1:20pm	Daily
CO9603	3:30pm	4:20pm	Daily
CO9605	6:30pm	7:20pm	Daily
CO9599	9:30pm	10:20pm	Daily
Saipan-Narita			
NW 078	8:25am	1:30pm	Daily via Nagoya
NW 075	4:50pm	7:30pm	Daily
Saipan-Osaka			
NW 083	4:30pm	7:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Nagoya			
NW 078	8:25am	11:05am	Daily
Saipan-Manila			
CO 895	4:45pm	6:35pm	6
CO 895	6:45pm	8:35pm	3
Saipan-Seoul			
OZ 604	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ 604	2:40am	6:30am	2,3,4,5,6,7
OZ 606	3:30pm	7:00pm	2,4,6,7
Saipan-Busan			
OZ 608	4:00am	7:35am	1,4,5,7
Saipan-Guanzhou			
CZ 3008	5:00am	8:00am	2,6
Saipan-Shanghai			
MU 590	4:20am	7:00am	2,6
Guam-Manila			
CO 891	6:00am	10:30am	3 via Yap and Koror
CO 893	6:30am	8:05am	6
CO 893	8:25am	10:00am	2,7
CO 893	5:50pm	9:10pm	5 via Koror
CO 933	8:00pm	9:40pm	Daily
PR 111	6:00am	7:45am	1,2,4,6,7
Guam-Hongkong			
CO 909	7:45pm	10:40pm	1,5
Guam-Rota			
CO 9598	10:15am	10:45am	1,2,6

ARRIVALS

Rota-Saipan			
CO 9598	11:10am	11:45am	1,2,6
Guam-Saipan			
CO 9316	2:30am	3:20am	Daily
CO9596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
CO9598	10:15am	11:45am	1,2,6 via Rota
CO9600	10:45am	11:35am	3,4,5,7
CO9602	2:00pm	2:50pm	Daily
CO9604	5:00pm	5:50pm	Daily
CO9606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily
Narita-Saipan			
NW 076	10:35am	3:05pm	Daily
NW 077	6:15pm	1:10am+1	Daily via Nagoya
Osaka-Saipan			
NW 084	10:40am	3:10pm	Daily
Nagoya-Saipan			
NW 077	8:45pm	1:10am+1	Daily
Manila-Saipan			
CO 890	9:15am	2:55pm	6
CO 890	11:45am	5:35pm	3
Seoul-Saipan			
OZ 605	9:00am	2:30pm	2,4,6,7
OZ 603	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ 603	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1,2,3,4,5,6
Busan-Saipan			
OZ 607	9:30pm	2:50am+1	3,4,6,7
Guanzhou-Saipan			
CZ 3007	8:00pm	4:00am+1	1,5
Shanghai-Saipan			
MU 589	8:05pm	3:00am+1	1,5
Manila-Guam			
CO 894	11:20am	4:55pm	2,7
CO 894	7:45pm	1:20am+1	6
CO 892	9:45pm	5:25am+1	3 via Koror
CO 892	9:45pm	6:30am+1	3 via Koror and Yap
CO 892	10:10pm	5:30am+1	5 via Koror
CO 934	11:10pm	4:40am+1	Daily
PR 110	10:15pm	4:00am+1	1,3,5,6,7
Hongkong-Guam			
CO 910	11:40pm	6:20am+1	1,5
Rota-Guam			
CO 9313	9:30am	10:00am	3,4,7

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; PR: Philippine Airlines; CZ: China Southern; CA: Air China; NW: Northwest; JO: Japan Airlines; OZ: Asiana; MU: China Eastern ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

Letters to the Editor

Education for the future or governmental welfare?

I am writing with regard to the article of Feb. 5, 2008 which dealt with the Public School System's shamefully low per-student annual expenditure. It is about time someone pointed out our central government's (especially the Legislature's) ongoing indifference to the education of the NMI's youth. The fact is that even though since 1997 the student population has increased considerably, and at least four additional schools have been opened, the per student yearly expenditure has been reduced from $4,629 in 1997 to $3,333 in 2008. This is due to large, repeated reductions in the school system's overall budget. These cuts in the education budget are solely to allow a continuation of the governmental welfare employment program that exists in the NMI. An example of this can be seen in the situation where a few hundred government workers were to be terminated due to lack of funds. It is sad when anyone loses a job, and it was repeatedly stated how sad this was for these individuals. What was not stated, however, was that their absence would cause any cuts in services or any other serious problems. This was not mentioned due to the fact that the elimination of these worker's positions would make no difference in the running of government agencies. In short, they are not needed.

Economically-minded, enlightened individuals spoke with basically one voice concerning the termination of these workers, and that voice said: "It's a good start!"

Later, the government stated that it would reprogram funds to keep the workers employed. Was there even an inkling of a thought that the reprogrammed money would be much better spent funding education? After all the problems PSS has had with funding, all the Legislature had to do was reprogram funds! At the present funding level, with the newly added burden of paying a nearly $2 million annual electrical bill, PSS will (toward the end of the fiscal year) have to close down all public schools. Also, one of the potential solutions for saving money next year is to discontinue bus services. How many parents would like to take their children to school and pick them up every day?

The public should not despair, however. There are ways of acquiring additional funding for education. As some people know (but perhaps many do not) the legislators, in addition to good salaries, are granted large discretionary funds (some exceeding $100,000 yearly). There is basically no oversight as to how they spend these funds, and, let's just say, much of the money is not spent in ways that are highly beneficial to the community. Therefore, I suggest that the legislators each transfer a mere 30 percent of their discretionary funds to PSS to help alleviate the public school funding shortfall. I am fairly sure that amount of money would at least keep the schools open and functioning at the Third-World funding levels they have had for years, and the buses would probably keep running.

For a longer-term solution, the central government should designate the Public School System and Department of Public Health as critical departments and subject to additional funding but not cuts. After all, education is the future of our youth and community and healthcare is (at times) life itself. To generate more funding for those critical departments the government should institute a 25 percent personnel reduction in all non-critical departments. There would be no need to terminate large numbers of workers. As workers retire, quit or are let go for other reasons, their vacant positions would not be filled. Many of those positions are not needed, and the ones that are essential would be consolidated so that two marginally busy jobs would become one actual full-time position.

It is time for you (the people of the NMI) to make a choice. Do you want you children properly educated so in the future they have a chance at worthwhile careers, or do you want your legislators spending tax money employing unskilled, unqualified and unneeded workers and frittering away discretionary funding on who knows what? Make your voices heard; contact your senators and representatives. Do not wait for the day (and it is coming) when your sons and daughters come home and tell you that there will be no more school buses for transportation or, worse yet, that the schools will be closed and locked. These are your children, and the tax dollars are also yours. Don't you feel badly that Guam (which is no paragon of education) spends nearly twice the local money per year per student as the NMI. I know I feel terrible about it! Everyone knows most of the legislators' children go to private schools. That is where the vast majority of their constituents' children attend school. PSS has requested a $42 million yearly budget; that would still put our schools well below the U.S. average, but it would be a start. Currently, the budget for the public schools is less that $36 million, and the schools simply cannot run on that amount.

Again, I am imploring all citizens who value the education of our youth to contact their legislators and demand a permanent solution to this ongoing and nearly terminal school funding problem. The future is at stake!

Thomas Wilkins
San Antonio, Saipan

Exploring geothermal energy for the CNMI: Considering initial factors

In my last letter, we asked the basic question: Has there been any attempt at geothermal verification as a viable resource in the CNMI? Let's now look at what initial factors may influence a geothermal installation for the CNMI *should* a viable source be suspected.

Without exploration to discover a viable geothermal source and on which island this might occur, a lot of questions remain in the dark. But the obvious source is at or near the volcanically active islands of Anatahan and Pagan—both of which have been alluded to by the Governor as "sources in the Northern Islands."

Initial development and up-front costs:

According to the Geothermal Energy Association, "Developing a new geothermal resource is a long and expensive process. Initial development steps are risky and upfront capital costs are important. Consequently, a major part of the cost of power is related to the reimbursement of capital invested and associated returns. In 2001, the Electric Power Research Institute estimated that capital reimbursement and associated interest account for 65 percent of total cost of geothermal power. This cost share compares to typical fuel charges of fossil fuel fired power facilities." In other words, it is likely that cost recovery for a geothermal installation would add about the same amount to a person's eventual electric bill as would the fuel we are currently purchasing.

As I said before, initial development, exploration and confirmation of a viable geothermal source is an expensive project, and there is no guarantee that the field will be deemed acceptable after exploration.

The development phases:

Again from the GEA: "Geothermal power development consists of successive development phases that aim to locate the resources (exploration), confirm the power generating capacity of the reservoir (confirmation) and build the power plant and associated structures (site development). Various kinds of parameters will influence the length, difficulty and materials required for these phases thereby affecting their cost." Has ANY of this been contemplated by the Governor? And, if so, where are the reports to substantiate it? These should be a part of open government and available to the public for review; not sprung on them after some nebulous "deal" has been concluded. CNMI legislators: please pay attention.

There is a huge amount of information at the GEA, and it surely cannot all be presented here. The bottom line is that any geothermal installation requires from three to five years to develop, and that's assuming all permits and processes go smoothly with no delays. Enter "PaganWatch," opposed to development that would "destroy" the natural and pristine beauty of the island. Well, a large geothermal installation, with its associated wells, pipes, converters and equipment just might eclipse the desires of such groups and surely result in greater effect than would have occurred by pozzolan removal and land reclamation. So, expect delays! That is, *if* PaganWatch is truly committed to the land and not just a political and/or greedy sham aimed at the destruction of the mining industry.

Cost and length of time for development:

The GEA has broken down the initial cost of development into detailed sections, but the final cost of an "on-line" geothermal plant will range from around $2500 per KW up to $3800 per KW. Compare that to fossil fuel plants at around $2400 per KW and a new modern, passive, modular nuclear installation at around $1000 per KW—all assuming a basic plant design rated to deliver about 100 megawatts—the size needed to supply all of Saipan adequately. These estimates translate to an electricity production *cost* of about 5.6 to 7.7 cents per KwH for geothermal, 5 cents per KwH for fuel oil and 2.5 to 3 cents per KwH for nuclear. But initial capitalization and development of the power plant is only a small part of the eventual cost that electricity will cost the consumer. There's fuel, operation and maintenance, electricity distribution, administrative, insurance, interest and profits—all added to the final bill—the one *you* pay.

And here's an interesting point well examined by the GEA: The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported in 2004 that the exploration phase *alone* for a 100 megawatt geothermal plant in a *new* area required an average of two years, ranged from one to 25 years and resulted in an average added cost to electricity produced of about 22.5 cents per KwH, roughly equivalent to the current cost of *oil*! And this cost (*only* for geothermal development) is *not* included in the cost of production listed above.

And here is yet another fact concluded and supported by the GEA: Electricity produced from geothermal sources by an Independent Power Producer was 44 per cent more costly than when produced by a municipality. *But*, of all the geothermal plants online today (and there are many), all but *one* were in the hands of IPP's. Basic reasoning here is that the 44 per cent higher cost is more than justified when taking into consideration that a municipality is usually just plain incompetent at running utility services!

Well, enough for a part 2. We'll look at part 3 next letter: "Getting the Power to You"

Dr. Thomas D. Arkle Jr.
San Jose, Tinian

Lower power rates for sports facilities

This is in response to your article on Feb. 19, 2008, "DCCA wants lower power rates for its sports section."

I support the Department of Community Cultural Affairs' efforts to exempt the Division of Sports and Recreation from the power consumption rates or to give it affordable rates for power consumption. It is enough as it is that our community is experiencing many obstacles. Our youths and community should not be affected with the means of enjoying our sports facilities. Our sports facilities provides a place for our youths and community to engage in physical activities such as basketball, volleyball, or any other indoor or outdoor sports for that matter. Our indoor facilities provides protection and shelter from sun and rain.

Sport facilities provide youths as well as the adults that away-from-home atmosphere to be with oneself and at the same time building and structuring their relationships with other community members. There are not too many sports facilities that have shelters on island and therefore I consider this attempt important not only for our youths but for all ages in the entire community on Saipan.

With the growing number of youths and population in our community, sports have been an essential part of their lives. It is a means of relaxation, growth and heath. It provides our youth and adults healthy camaraderie systems in their lives. It is also highly recommended for physical exercises and mental challenges. Our government should not look at the power rate consumption to affect our community in accessing sports facilities in the CNMI. Think about our youths and our community. It is one source of keeping our lives healthy.

Joaquin (Jack) T. Sablan
Dan Dan, Saipan

Hatred for alien workers

Mr. McCue, I understand why some indigenous people here in CNMI do not want us guest workers. And I do believe that, even if they do not want us, the truth is they still need us. You left the CNMI more than 10 years ago and I could no help but wonder why you hate us so much. Can you give me a clear picture? And by then, maybe I could relate to your sentiments.

You are thousands of miles away, yet you are reaching out just to send hatred. Can't you find something useful and productive to do in the community where you are in now, instead of sending messages of hatred from thousands of miles away, where you can divert your anger and hatred in more positive ways? The people of Florida need people like you.

You are correct when you say that we have the right to freely leave whenever we want. We are still here because we still have existing contracts and we are still needed by our employers. So I guess we have the right to remain in the CNMI.

And to tell you straight, we are still here because there are very few people here in CNMI who are like you.

When you were here, was there no time when you did not use or ask help from guest workers or have you never been a friend to anyone of them?

I am just an average guest worker here. But I have lot of local friends. They treat me well with love and respect and vice-versa. There is hatred in your heart for guest workers. For whatever reason, I don't know. And you are making it appear as if you care so much about indigenous people in CNMI.

And if you truly care about this island, you should have not left. You should have stayed and shared your knowledge and great skills here.

Should we have chosen those countries you mentioned, we will be doing the same? My answer is No! Simply because we did not choose any of them.

You do not have the right to make us leave. Excuse me, we are not working for you nor do you give a share of the wages we receive. And you are not in a position to tell us where you want us to find a better life! And in case I legally go there in Florida to find a better life, you can't tell me to leave.

Malou Berueco
Gualo Rai, Saipan

Budget process moving too slowly—Heinz

By AGNES E. DONATO
agnes_donato@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A lawmaker says an updated budget will be of little use if passed too late.

"The budget process is moving too slow. The window of opportunity is closing. Each day of delay takes away the usefulness of a new budget," Rep. Heinz Hofschneider said Tuesday.

The government is now midway into the second quarter of fiscal year 2008. As of Tuesday, the House of Ways and Means Committee was still deliberating on the budget. To become law, an appropriation bill must be passed by the House of Representatives and the Senate, and approved by the governor.

Hofschneider said that operating under a continuing resolution is acceptable if the current revenue level is greater than that of the previous year. But if the current funding level is lower, expenditures must be adjusted immediately.

The FY2007 budget was $163 million. This year, revenue is projected to reach only $160 million.

Due to a lack of a new budget, the government continues to operate under the approved spending plan for FY2007. In other words, the government is spending $40.75 million a quarter when it is only collecting $40 million.

"By not passing a budget, the Legislature has allowed this government to go on deficit spending," Hofschneider said.

The lawmaker said the governor is partly to blame for the situation because he failed to submit a budget proposal on time. But the larger responsibility rests on previous and current lawmakers.

The 15th Legislature failed to pass a budget during the four months that the governor's proposal had been before the body. The 16th Legislature has been in office for five weeks, and still has not passed the budget.

Chalan Kanoa chosen as pilot project for neighborhood revitalization plan

By RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN
rianne_pangelinan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Through the initiative of the 10th Saipan & Northern Islands Municipal Council, the first Neighborhood Revitalization and Enhancement Plan was unveiled Tuesday during a meeting with other government agencies and enforcement agencies.

The vision of the Neighborhood Revitalization and Enhancement Plan is to make community members realize that they themselves are responsible for revitalizing and enhancing their own neighborhoods and to act toward achieving this goal to produce a healthy and safe community.

The first test project will be in the village of Chalan Kanoa where the group will assess necessary needs and conduct studies for the village.

According to Bill Torres, who serves as a facilitator for the Municipal Council, the reason they chose Chalan Kanoa to be a primary focus is because it is the most diverse and the most neglected village on Saipan.

Municipal Council chair Antonia Tudela said that so much attention and resources have been dedicated to the hotels, beaches, scenic vistas and other tourist sites. "We need to apply the same amount of energy and enthusiasm in dedicating ourselves to improving the quality of life at the inner villages."

Among the number of activities set forth as project goals and objectives are pothole repairs, junk vehicle and scrap metal removal, debris removal, street sweeping, vacant lot cleanups, graffiti abatement, animal control management, and others.

Those who were in attendance were representatives from the Department of Public Safety, Coastal Resource Management, Division of Environmental Quality, Department of Public Health, Department of Lands and Natural Resources, Saipan Zoning Board, Historic Preservation Office, the Marianas Visitors Authority, and the Saipan Mayor's Office, or Department of Public Works

Representatives of each agency agreed to visit the first project site to conduct their own assessment on the village's necessary needs and then present them in the next meeting, which is set for March 4.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Neighborhood Watch Task Force newly elected chairman PO3 Jason Tarkong leads the first organizational meeting of the Saipan Neighborhood Watch Task Force at the Saipan Mayor's Office conference room in San Antonio Wednesday last week.

CRIME OF THE WEEK

Copper wire theft

Crime Stoppers is asking the community for more information on any person(s) responsible for stealing any copper wires.

A preliminary report reveals that on Feb. 14, 2008, police were dispatched to a reported copper wire theft case. Police arrived at the CUC Sub Tank water holding location in Koblerville and discovered an estimated 400 feet of copper wire stolen from the nearby utility poles. The area was last secured at around 7pm on Feb. 13.

Crime Stoppers and the Department of Public Safety is asking all recycling operators to report the identity information of all person(s) selling copper wire to their establishment by calling 911.Recycling operators should fulfill their civic duty to report possible stolen copper wires prior to accepting or processing the copper wires.

Anyone having information about this crime, call the Crime Stoppers hotline at 234-7272. Crime Stoppers pays cash rewards up to $1,000 for information leading to an arrest. Caller ID is not used. All calls remain anonymous. ***(Crime Stoppers)***

Hopwood's Physical Education class eats fresh at Subway

A total of 150 eighth-grade physical education students from Hopwood Junior High School have gone in separate batches on a field trip to Subway in Chalan Piao to learn more about healthy eating habits with lessons learned to be included in their school quiz.

The activity was initiated by their teachers Luna Litulumar and Patrick Romolor who made arrangements with Leilannie M. Salvani, Subway administrative and personnel supervisor. Salvani served as the resource person during the field trips. She discussed with the students the functions of specific vegetables such as lettuce, cucumber, tomatoes, sweet onions, and olives that go into a Subway sandwich and all it can do for their health.

These vegetables are some examples of the best antioxidants that neutralize highly reactive and destructive compounds called free radicals. Vegetables rich in Vitamin C, Vitamin E, and Vitamin A help the body to defend itself from pollutants, alcohol, and environmental causes of oxidation. Green peppers and green leafy vegetables are rich in Vitamin C. Examples of excellent sources of Vitamin E are nuts, seeds, wheat germ, whole grains, and vegetable oil. Vitamin A is present in tomatoes and green leafy vegetables.

Milk and cheese are good sources of calcium that strengthen bones and teeth also complementing Subway sandwiches.

The field trips to Saipan's only health food chain went from Feb. 11 to 15.

"I'm teaching them healthy eating habits. Before we go to the physical exercise part, I know that they first have to eat healthy. I know that Subway could help in explaining that part," Litulumar said.

She added, "We've actually already gone through it [giving lessons on healthy eating habits]. But we needed more elaboration from Subway."

Litulumar said the brief lecture provided by Salvani during the field trip would be a part of the students' classroom quiz. The lecture was given before the students were served their Subway meals.

Romolor said bringing the students to Subway would help them develop a better lifestyle safe from the diseases that come with poor food choices.

"I hope that from now on, they could begin developing healthy eating habits so that they could stay away from diseases such as diabetes, kidney failure, heart problems, and many others. I hope that with this activity, they could start making healthy choices," Romolor said.

Hopwood Junior High School is the second school that had its physical education students go on a field trip to Subway for a lesson in healthy eating habits. In March last year, fourth and sixth grade PE students from William S. Reyes Elementary School also went on a field trip to Subway with their teacher, Brandon Concepcion. The field trips ran from Mar. 5 to 20.

In September, Concepcion brought his PE students which were 200 second and third graders to Subway for their turn to learn lessons about healthy eating habits.

"I believe that starting them young is the best way to go," Concepcion said.

Teaming up with school activities is part of Subway Investments Corp.'s outreach program and a way of giving back to the community. Subway Investments Corp. participated in the Chalan Kanoa Headstart Parent Education Day Safety and Nutrition Fair on Apr. 26, 2007 through the outreach program.

The Subway restaurant chain is the world's largest submarine sandwich franchise, with 28,867 locations in 86 countries. Headquartered in Milford, Connecticut, the Subway restaurant chain was co-founded by Fred DeLuca and Dr. Peter Buck in 1965.

The Subway chain has been named the number one global franchise opportunity by Entrepreneur magazine in its 2008 franchise ranking.

For more information about the Subway restaurant chain, visit www.subwaypacific.com. ***(Subway)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Some of the eighth-grade physical education students of Hopwood Junior High School pose for the camera with their teacher Luna Litulumar (left, second row); and Leilannie Salvani (right, first row), Subway administrative and personnel supervisor who gave the students a brief lecture on healthy eating habits. The students went to Subway in Chalan Piao on Feb. 12. Also in photo is Patrick Romolor, another teacher (fourth from left, second row).

BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

Happy birthday greetings go out to Jose T. Palacios, who is celebrating his 30th birthday today, Feb. 21, 2008. Greetings come from the management and staff of Joeten Enterprises.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Business

STOCK Portfolio

ASIAN MARKETS

AUSTRALIA
5,648.700
Down 39.900
(-0.70%)

HONG KONG
23,914.64
Down 208.53
(-0.86%)

JAKARTA
2,700.2339
Down 11.638
(-0.43%)

TOKYO
13,574.09
Down 183.82
(-1.34%)

K. LUMPUR
1,425.49
Up 12.66
(+0.90%)

MANILA
3,180.44
Down 10.23
(-0.32%)

SINGAPORE
3,067.12
Down 30.94
(-1.00%)

SEOUL
1,695.5
Down 25.02
(-1.45%)

BANGKOK
835.35
Down 0.27
(-0.03%)

LEADING INDICATORS

DOW
12,337.22
-10.99

NASDAQ
2,306.20
-15.60

S&P
1,348.78
-1.21

MONEY MARKET

Australian Dollar	1.0914
British Pound	0.5131
Canadian Dollar	1.0152
Chinese Renmbi	7.15
Euro	0.679
Hong Kong Dollar	7.8015
Indian Rupee	40.058
Indonesian Rupiah	9173.5
Japanese Yen	108.01
Malaysian Ringgit	3.2215
New Zealand Dollar	1.2564
Philippine Peso	40.67
Singapore Dollar	1.4112
South Korean Won	944.35
Swiss Franc	1.0962
Taiwan Dollar	31.625
Thailand Baht	31.45

In U.S. dollar terms

Source: Associated Press

GTA TeleGuam enhances data roaming

TAMUNING, GUAM—GTA TeleGuam announced yesterday that it has started offering enhanced data roaming to Japan.

GTA's BlackBerry 8707g Smartphone users are able to send and receive email, browse the Internet, and use Instant Messaging such as Google and Yahoo on their 8707g handsets while roaming in Japan.

"We are very excited to announce expanded BlackBerry Data Roaming in Japan. GTA MPULSE Wireless subscribers utilizing the BlackBerry 8707 Smartphone model, which supports the frequencies required for use in Japan, will be able to use their BlackBerry data service while waiting for connecting flights, shopping in Tokyo, or attending the many different conferences and festivals held in Japan," said Andrew Gayle, vice president and general manager of GTA Mpulse Wireless.

BlackBerry was first launched in 1999, and is now offered in more than 60 countries, with over 8 million subscribers worldwide. With the BlackBerry solution and GTA's voice and data roaming service, wireless subscribers are able to increase productivity and performance by being mobile and staying connected.

For more information about GTA's products and services, call GTA's "Always There" Call Center Hotline at 644-4GTA (4482) for more information.

GTA is Guam's leading full-service telecommunications company providing fixed landline communications to nearly 65,000 business and residential customers; MPULSE™ Wireless mobile phone service with advanced GSM technology, BlackBerry, long-distance, and Spyder Broadband Internet service. For more information, visit www.gta.net. ***(GTA)***

Stocks end lower amid inflation fears

NEW YORK (AP)—Wall Street gave up a big early advance and closed mixed Tuesday after oil prices closed above $100 for the first time and stoked fears that inflation will stymie an already troubled economy.

Soaring oil prices could bring more problems for consumers, having already made many Americans shy about spending in recent months. Consumer spending, a key driver of U.S. economic growth, has also been shaken by falling home prices and the volatile stock market.

The market was also concerned that rising inflation might make the Federal Reserve reconsider its bias toward lowering interest rates to help the economy. The central bank, which next meets March 18, last month slashed rates by 1.25 percent.

"I think there are still a lot of worries in the market that we have this stagnant growth in the economy and higher prices," said Richard Sparks, senior equities analyst at Schaeffer's Investment Research in Cincinnati.

Investors likely were positioning themselves ahead of a half-dozen economic reports that could give the market further direction. Paramount will be Wednesday's Labor Department report on consumer prices for January, which is a closely watched gauge for inflation. The Fed will also release minutes from its last meeting.

Meanwhile, new concerns that banks are facing more financial problems this year dragged the sector sharply lower - and reminded investors that the credit crisis appears far from a resolution.

The Dow Jones industrial average fell 10.99, or 0.09 percent, to 12,337.22 after being up more than 150 points earlier in the session.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Credit Suisse catches subprime virus

GENEVA (AP)—After seeming to have skirted the worst of the mortgage issues plaguing the financial sector, Credit Suisse revealed Tuesday that it had suspended a "handful" of traders for overvaluing assets and would take a $1 billion hit to its first-quarter results. Switzerland's second-largest bank said it would still post a profit for the period, but the mispricing of asset-backed securities led to an overvaluation of about $2.85 billion. Traders didn't update their figures to keep up with the market downturn, and this tardiness resulted in assets being marked higher than their actual value, Credit Suisse Chief Executive Brady Dougan said during a conference call. Several traders are being investigated, but an outright fraud had not been detected, he said.

3 cell carriers in price battle

NEW YORK (AP)—Verizon Wireless introduced an unlimited calling plan $99.99 a month on Tuesday, a move that was quickly matched by AT&T Mobility and T-Mobile USA and weighed down stock prices for all U.S. mobile carriers. Verizon Wireless was apparently the first major carrier to make an "unlimited" plan available nationwide with no domestic roaming or long-distance fees. Its announcement was all but five hours old when AT&T announced its own unlimited plan. Three hours later, T-Mobile followed suit, saying it would introduce a $99.99 plan on Thursday. Unlike the Verizon Wireless and AT&T plans, T-Mobile's includes unlimited text and picture messaging, which costs $14.99 per month when added to other T-Mobile plans.

Delta, Northwest boards to meet on combo

ATLANTA (AP)—The boards of directors of Delta Air Lines Inc. and Northwest Airlines Corp. were expected to vote Wednesday on a combination provided their pilot unions can reach their own integration deal by then, people briefed on the discussions said Tuesday. If the pilot agreement can't be reached by the time of the meeting, the boards were expected to just get an update on the status of merger talks between the two airlines, according to three people familiar with the situation who asked not to be named because the talks were in a sensitive stage. A fourth person familiar with the talks also confirmed that Delta's board was expected to meet Wednesday, and the company is mulling a Thursday announcement if everything falls into place.

Oil jumps above $100 on refinery outage

NEW YORK (AP) -- Oil futures shot higher Tuesday, closing above $100 for the first time as investors bet that crude prices will keep climbing despite evidence of plentiful supplies and falling demand. At the pump, gas prices rose further above $3 a gallon.

There was no single driver behind oil's sharp price jump; investors seized on an explosion at a 67,000 barrel per day refinery in Texas, the falling dollar, the possibility that OPEC may cut production next month, the threat of new violence in Nigeria and continuing tensions between the U.S. and Venezuela.

And rising oil prices mean higher gas prices.

"As the economy weakens, it's going to be met with $3.50 and $3.60 gasoline," said James Cordier, founder of OptionSellers.com, a Tampa, Fla., trading firm. "And that really spells trouble for the consumer."

Light, sweet crude for March delivery rose $4.51 to settle at a record $100.01 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange after earlier rising to $100.10, a new trading record. It was the first time since Jan. 3 that oil had been above $100.

At the pump, meanwhile, gas prices jumped 1.8 cents to a national average price of $3.032 a gallon Tuesday, according to AAA and the Oil Price Information Service. Retail prices, which typically lag the futures market, are following oil prices higher. The Energy Department and many analysts expect gas prices to peak this spring well above last May's record of $3.227 a gallon.

Blu-ray wins after HD DVD is scuttled

NEW YORK (AP)—The HD DVD is now the Highly Dead DVD.

Toshiba Corp., creator of the HD DVD, dropped out of the battle Tuesday over the next generation of movie-disc technology and conceded to the rival Blu-ray format from Sony.

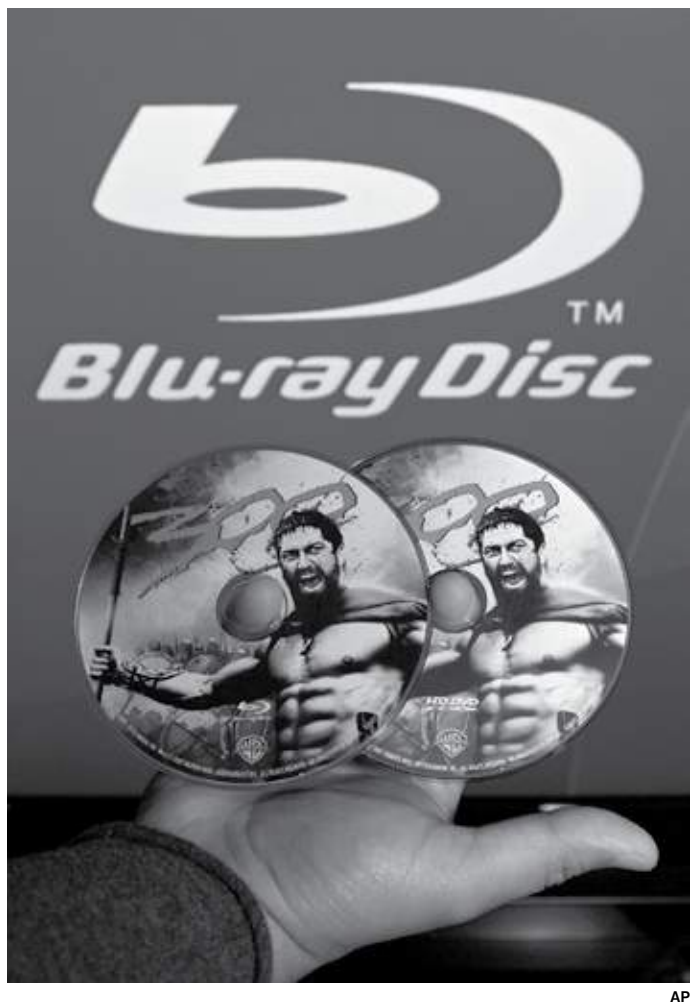
It was the biggest battle between two video formats since Betamax lost out to VHS in the 1980s.

In the long run, the end of the latest format war is expected to be good for consumers, who will no longer have to agonize over which technology to choose for high-definition movies, and won't have to go to the trouble and expense of buying two players.

But in the short term, Toshiba's defeat not only leaves 1 million HD DVD customers worldwide with dead-end hardware but also ends a rivalry that kept down prices for players and pushed the Blu-ray group to match the features available on HD DVD players.

Analysts say people interested in getting a Blu-ray player would do well to wait. For one thing, it will take 12 to 18 months for Blu-ray players to become as cheap and full-featured as HD DVD players, which have been selling for just over $100, according to ABI Research.

Many people who did buy HD DVD players did so recently. In fact, Toshiba said the holiday season was its best ever. Stephen Brown, a Huntington Beach, Calif., technology manager who bought an HD DVD player in November, doesn't regret it, even though his wife now calls him "Betamax Brown."



AP

A Best Buy salesman shows copies of Warner Bros' film "300" in both Blu-ray Disc and HD DVD formats at the Best Buy store in Burbank, Calif. Tuesday, Feb. 19, 2008.

"Just the fact that I could go out and spend $119 or $120 and have a really nice player, that was a no-brainer at that point," he said Tuesday.

Brown said it he will probably look at getting a Blu-ray player in a year or so, when the price comes down to around $150 from about $400 now and various features become standard.

Both HD DVD and Blu-ray discs deliver crisp, clear pictures and sound, a perfect match for the high-definition TVs sets Americans have been rushing to buy for the past two years.

Nation

Obama wins Wis. for 9th straight triumph

AP

Democratic presidential hopeful Sen. Barack Obama, D-Ill., speaks during a roundtable with Texans on housing and predatory lending at the Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center Tuesday, Feb. 19, 2008, in San Antonio, Texas.

WASHINGTON (AP)—Barack Obama cruised past a fading Hillary Rodham Clinton in the Wisconsin primary Tuesday night, gaining the upper hand in a Democratic presidential race for the ages.

It was Obama's ninth straight victory over the past three weeks, and left the former first lady in desperate need of a comeback in a race she long commanded as front-runner.

"The change we seek is still months and miles away," Obama told a boisterous crowd in Houston in a speech in which he also pledged to end the war in Iraq in his first year in office.

"I opposed this war in 2002. I will bring this war to an end in 2009," he declared.

In a race growing increasingly negative, Obama cut deeply into Clinton's political bedrock in Wisconsin, splitting the support of white women there almost evenly with her. According to polling place interviews, he also ran well among working class voters in the blue collar battleground that was prelude to primaries in the larger industrial states of Ohio and Pennsylvania.

Clinton made no mention of her defeat, and showed no sign of surrender in an appearance in Youngstown, Ohio.

"Both Senator Obama and I would make history," the New York senator said. "But only one of us is ready on day one to be commander in chief, ready to manage our economy, and ready to defeat the Republicans. Only one of us has spent 35 years being a doer, a fighter and a champion for those who need a voice."

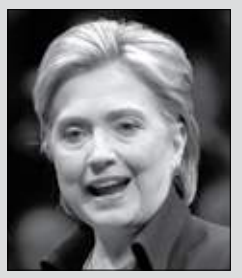
In a clear sign of their relative standing in the race, most cable television networks abruptly cut away from coverage of Clinton's rally when Obama began to speak in Texas.

Sen. John McCain of Arizona won the Republican primary with ease, dispatching former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee and edging closer to the 1,191 delegates he needs to clinch the GOP nomination at the party convention in St. Paul, Minn. next summer.

Clinton says Obama relies on 'words'

YOUNGSTOWN, Ohio (AP)—Ignoring her crushing loss in Wisconsin to rival Barack Obama, Democrat Hillary Rodham Clinton pressed her case Tuesday that the Illinois senator offers little more than talk.

"It's about picking a president who relies not just on words, but on work, hard work, to get America back to work," Clinton said at a labor rally here. "Someone who's not just in the speeches business."



Clinton

The New York senator tried to battle back from her ninth straight loss to Obama since the Super Tuesday contests Feb. 5, vowing to fix trade agreements like the North American Free Trade Agreement, which have disproportionally hurt working-class voters in places like Ohio.

The state holds its primary March 4, and Clinton is depending on victories here and in Texas to revive her fading candidacy.

But exit polls in Wisconsin offered ominous warnings for Clinton as she tries to reconsitute her political base in Ohio and elsewhere.

Obama defeated her among less educated voters and nearly tied her among white women - two groups that have formed the core of her candidacy. Young voters turned out in droves for Obama, more than offsetting Clinton's advantage among seniors. Wisconsin voters also said the need for change trumps experience 2-to-1.

Clinton did her best to push on, bluntly challenging Obama on his fitness to lead.

"Only one of us is ready on day one to be commander in chief, ready to manage our economy, ready to defeat the Republicans. Only one of us has spent 35 years being a doer, a fighter, and a champion for those who need a voice," she said to cheers.

She also addressed the issue of trade - a vulnerability for the former first lady, who championed NAFTA while it was being negotiated during her husband's presidency. She has since become a NAFTA critic and has advocated a "time out" from similar trade agreements.

"My opponent has taken to attacking me on NAFTA. I've long been a critic of the shortcomings of NAFTA," Clinton said, noting that she wasn't in the Senate when the agreement was negotiated.

4 students die in Minn. school bus crash

COTTONWOOD, Minn. (AP)—A school bus and several other vehicles crashed in southwestern Minnesota Tuesday, killing four students and forcing the first-arriving motorists to rush some of the injured to nearby hospitals.

The bus was hit by a van around 3:25 p.m. on a highway north of Cottonwood. The bus then hit a pickup and tipped on its side, State Patrol Lt. Mark Peterson said. At least 14 people were hurt.

Rescue squads and ambulances from many nearby cities arrived at the crash site. The Marshall Independent reported that the first motorists on the scene were asked to take some children to the hospital.

AP

Rescue workers are seen at the site of a bus crash Tuesday Feb. 19, 2008 on Cottonwood, Minn.

"I parked my car and called 911, and ran to the school bus and the driver was handing kids out the door as fast as I could take them," Karen Mahlum told the newspaper.

Other motorists also stopped and took kids from the driver.

"You just wanted to make sure it was safe," she said. "They were screaming and screaming on the bus. There were so many kids."

Pictures from the scene showed the school bus lying on its side on the hood and cab of a pickup truck.

The bus was on its regular route, carrying children from kindergarten through 12th grade.

Initial reports said the bus was carrying 40 people, but it actually carried 28 students and a driver, Minnesota Public Safety spokeswoman Christine Krueger said.

Parents were asked to gather at Lakeview School to await word on their children.

Of the 11 victims taken to Avera Marshall Regional Medical Center, two were in critical condition while one had already been treated and released, spokeswoman Deann Holland said.

Others were being treated for back and neck injuries, lacerations, bumps and bruises, she said.

Two of the victims were taken by ambulance to Granite Falls Hospital, which is about 15 miles north of the accident scene. Hospital CEO George Gerlach said one was 11 years old and the other 14.

Former teacher sentenced in sex case

LAURENS, S.C. (AP)—A former middle school teacher was sent to prison for six years Tuesday for having sexual encounters with five teenage boys. Authorities said Allenna Ward, 24, met 14- and 15-year-old boys at the school where she taught as well as at a motel, a park and behind a restaurant.

"I apologize from the depths of my heart," Ward said in court.

Police began investigating last year after school officials found a note believed to have been written by Ward to one of the boys. Some of the victims were students at Bell Street Middle School in Clinton, where Ward taught. She was fired about a year ago.

Ward

Ward pleaded guilty in September to three counts of second-degree criminal sexual conduct with a minor and three lewd acts on a minor.

Forensic psychiatrist Donna Schwartz-Watts said Ward is not a pedophile, but rather a childlike victim suffering from personality disorders and a repressed childhood. Schwartz-Watts said the minister's daughter lived a sheltered life but really was a "free spirit" who never got a chance to break away from her family.

ACROSS THE NATION

US may shoot down satellite Wednesday

WASHINGTON (AP)—An attempt to blast a crippled U.S. spy satellite out of the sky using a Navy heat-seeking missile - possibly on Wednesday night - would be the first real-world use of this piece of the Pentagon's missile defense network. But that is not the mission for which it was intended. The attempted shootdown, already approved by President Bush, is seen by some as blurring the lines between defending against a weapon like a long-range missile and targeting satellites in orbit. The three-stage Navy missile, designated the SM-3, has chalked up a high rate of success in a series of tests since 2002.

Nancy Reagan released from hospital

SANTA MONICA, Calif. (AP)—Former First Lady Nancy Reagan has been released from a California hospital two days after falling at her Bel-Air home. Spokeswoman Joanne Drake says the 86-year-old was released Tuesday from St. John's Health Center in Santa Monica and was "very happy to be back in her home." Reagan fell Sunday morning and was taken to the hospital where doctors determined she did not break a hip. She did not attend a 97th birthday celebration held for her late husband at the Reagan library on Feb. 6.

Billy Graham home following surgery

ASHEVILLE, N.C. (AP)—Evangelist Billy Graham returned to his mountainside home Tuesday to continue his recovery from surgery to update a shunt that controls excess fluid on his brain, officials said. Graham, who underwent the elective surgery last Wednesday, is recovering well, and his physicians are pleased with his progress, said Mission Hospitals spokeswoman Merrell Gregory. Dr. Ralph Loomis, Graham's neurosurgeon, said doctors will continue to calibrate the updated valve at Graham's home. The shunt was first installed in 2000 and drains fluid from Graham's brain through a small tube, relieving excess pressure that can cause symptoms similar to Parkinson's disease.

Asia

RP bishop calls for 'people power' to fight corruption

A young protester holds slogans as she joins a rally calling for the ouster of Philippine President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo in suburban Manila on Tuesday, Feb. 19, 2008. AP

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—The head of an influential group of Roman Catholic bishops called Tuesday for a new "people power" revolt in the Philippines to fight endemic corruption.

Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, president of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, made the comments amid mounting calls for President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo to resign as a Senate inquiry looks into alleged bribery in a US$330 million government contract with Chinese telecommunications giant ZTE Corp.

Church leaders backed earlier "people power" protests by hundreds of thousands of Filipinos that toppled two presidents in the predominantly Roman Catholic nation—late strongman Ferdinand Marcos in 1986 and President Joseph Estrada in 2001.

Floods, landslides kill 9 in RP, 7 missing, 140,000 displaced

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Weeklong rains have triggered landslides and floods across the eastern Philippines, leaving at least nine people dead, seven missing and tens of thousands displaced, aid officials said Wednesday.

Most of the deaths occurred from drowning in Eastern Samar province since Feb. 15, when a low pressure area dumped heavy rains that caused flash floods and cut off major roads and damaged bridges, the Provincial Disaster Coordinating Council and the Philippine Red Cross reported.

The government's national disaster council in Manila said the entire province was under a state of emergency to enable officials to draw emergency funds for relief operations.

Eastern Samar Gov. Ben Evardone was quoted as saying about 140,000 people have been displaced and many houses were submerged.

The Red Cross said at least 23 people were injured when four rivers burst their banks.

US military imposes curbs in Japan

TOKYO (AP)—The U.S. military imposed tight restrictions on all servicemen in Okinawa on Wednesday, limiting troops to bases, places of work or off-base housing amid a furor over the arrest of a Marine on suspicion of rape.

The restrictions, which go beyond a midnight curfew already in place for enlisted Marines on the southern Japanese island, started early Wednesday and were indefinite, U.S. Forces Japan officials said.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Indonesian terror suspect, 2 others arrested in Philippines

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—An Indonesian terror suspect and two Filipinos were arrested during a raid on their hideout in the southern Philippines, military officials said Tuesday. Mohamad Baehaqi, an alleged member of the Indonesia-based Jemaah Islamiyah terror network, was arrested Sunday in Davao Oriental province after more than a month of surveillance, military chief Gen. Hermogenes Esperon told reporters. Esperon said Baehaqi, 26, has been in the country since September 2003 and admitted he joined a group of key Jemaah Islamiyah operatives hiding and training militants in the Philippines.

Musharraf's days could be numbered

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (AP)—Pervez Musharraf has survived combat as a career soldier and assassination attempts as president. Now the will of his own people has pushed him to the precipice. A sweeping opposition win in elections has diminished the U.S.-backed leader's political standing as never before and many predict his days in power are numbered. Musharraf has already given up his command of the army, and his rock-bottom popularity at home has diminished his effectiveness to his Western allies in the fight against Islamic extremism. "I don't see him surviving. It is just a question of time," said Shafqat Mahmood, a political analyst who is a prominent commentator in Pakistani newspapers and television.

7 dead in SKorean helicopter crash

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—A South Korean army helicopter crashed into a mountain near Seoul early Wednesday, killing all seven people on board, an army officer said. The UH-1H went down in Yangpyong, about 25 miles east of Seoul around 1:40 a.m., army spokesman Lt. Col. Ko Dong-hun told The Associated Press. Two pilots, two medical officers and three soldiers died when the aircraft crashed while returning to base after transporting an emergency patient to a military hospital, he said. The bodies were sent to a military hospital in Seongnam, just south of Seoul.

3rd bombing hits southern Afghanistan

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan (AP)—A car bomb exploded near a police compound Tuesday in southern Afghanistan, killing at least one civilian and wounding four, a police official said. It was the third attack in Kandahar province in as many days. The car bomb was apparently triggered remotely, said police officer Jan Mohammad, who was at the bombing scene in Kandahar, southern Afghanistan's largest city and the Taliban's former stronghold. More than 100 people were killed by a suicide bomber just outside Kandahar city Sunday, while 38 died Monday at a market near the border with Pakistan when a suicide car bomb explosion targeted a Canadian military convoy. The death toll from those two bombings, about 140, made it the deadliest spate of militant attacks in post-Taliban Afghanistan.

World

Mysterious creatures found in Antarctica

AP

In this photo released by the Australian Antarctic Division, tunicates, an animal that is stalk like in structure and looks like glass tulips are seen in Antarctic waters in January 2008.

SYDNEY, Australia (AP)—Scientists investigating the icy waters of Antarctica said Tuesday they have collected mysterious creatures including giant sea spiders and huge worms in the murky depths.

Australian experts taking part in an international program to take a census of marine life in the ocean at the far south of the world collected specimens from up to 6,500 feet beneath the surface, and said many may never have been seen before.

Some of the animals far under the sea grow to unusually large sizes, a phenomenon called gigantism that scientists still do not fully understand.

"Gigantism is very common in Antarctic waters," Martin Riddle, the Australian Antarctic Division scientist who led the expedition, said in a statement. "We have collected huge worms, giant crustaceans and sea spiders the size of dinner plates."

The specimens were being sent to universities and museums around the world for identification, tissue sampling and DNA studies.

"Not all of the creatures that we found could be identified and it is very likely that some new species will be recorded as a result of these voyages," said Graham Hosie, head of the census project.

The expedition is part of an ambitious international effort to map life forms in the Antarctic Ocean, also known as the Southern Ocean, and to study the impact of forces such as climate change on the undersea environment.

Cubans hope Raul Castro brings reform

HAVANA (AP)—Now that Fidel Castro has retired, many Cubans are looking to his brother to let more people open businesses, own homes and even travel abroad. But it will probably fall to a new generation of leaders to ultimately fulfill or frustrate their dreams of prosperity.

During his 1 1/2 years as acting president, 76-year-old Raul Castro has hinted at reform but made few major changes - a reticence many see as a sign of respect for his beloved, more doctrinaire older brother, who survived despite the efforts of 10 U.S. presidents to bring him down.

And while hoping that Raul and his likely No. 2, Carlos Lage, will advocate for change, they wonder how that will fly with Fidel, who stepped down but isn't going away.

Hunt for stolen art leads to parked car

ZURICH, Switzerland (AP)—A frantic search for four stolen Impressionist paintings led to a most unlikely place: the parking lot of a mental hospital just a few hundred yards from the scene of the crime.

There, in the back seat of an unlocked car, a painting by Claude Monet and another by Vincent van Gogh were found Monday in perfect condition, authorities said Tuesday.

The paintings, worth $64 million combined, were still under the display glass used by the private museum from which they were stolen in a Feb. 10 armed robbery, museum director Lukas Gloor said.

WORLD BRIEFS

Russian court finds Adamov guilty

MOSCOW (AP)—Yevgeny Adamov, the former atomic energy minister who Washington accused of stealing millions in U.S. government funds, was found guilty Tuesday of fraud and abuse of office. Adamov, who was arrested in Switzerland and jailed for nearly six months in 2005 on U.S. prosecutors' request, has denied the charges. "I have a clear conscience," he said in televised comments. Yekaterina Novozhilova, assistant to the chief judge at a Moscow District Court, said the judge's reading of the lengthy verdict would resume Wednesday, when sentencing was also expected. Prosecutors have demanded that Adamov be sentenced to nine years in prison.

Chief says Australia's combat job done

CANBERRA, Australia (AP)—Australia's 550 combat troops based in southern Iraq have helped to make the area more secure and should now be withdrawn, the defense chief said Wednesday. Air Chief Marshal Angus Houston told a Senate panel that planning was under way to withdraw the 550 soldiers based in Dhi Qar Province as well as 65 army trainers. His government was elected in November with a promise to remove Australia's combat troops from Iraq by mid-2008. The troops have been on standby to offer backup to Iraqi forces in the south for the past two years but were no longer needed, Houston told the committee.

Witness: Diana feared plot by royals

LONDON (AP)—Weeks before Princess Diana died, she told her lover, Dodi Fayed, she feared the royal family was plotting to kill her and make it look like an accident, a former assistant to Fayed testified Tuesday. Melissa Henning quoted Fayed as saying Diana told him the accident would happen when her sons, Princes William and Harry, were not around. Henning gave her testimony by video from the United States to a coroner's inquest examining the death of Diana and Fayed in a Paris car crash in August 1997. Henning, who worked as Fayed's U.S. assistant, said she first thought the fears were a "little far-fetched," but later realized the couple "deeply" believed this was a possibility.

UN: Sudan's north-south peace is fragile

UNITED NATIONS (AP)—Three years after the end of Sudan's north-south civil war, a top U.N. envoy told the Security Council on Tuesday that the foundations for durable peace "remain fragile" because of a lack of mutual trust. Ashraf Qazi stressed that "peace in Sudan is indivisible," and he warned that if the 2005 peace deal between the northern-based government and southern rebels unravels "the prospects for a peaceful outcome in Darfur would largely disappear." The agreement ended a 21-year war that left an estimated 2 million people dead. The pact created a unity government led by President Omar al-Bashir and his one-time military rival, First Vice President Salva Kiir.

Environment

Calling all cooks

The Cook A Rainbow event is back and all nonprofessional chefs are urged to participate in the annual cooking contest slated for Saturday, March 29 at the Sabalu Market in Susupe.

The challenge is open to nonprofessionals only. Tayna B. Camacho, contest coordinator said, "Nonprofessionals are members of the community with no association to a restaurant or food service establishment. Participation is limited and interested cooks must sign up with our office."

According to Camacho, judging will be based on taste, creative presentation, texture, use of fresh local ingredients and originality. Registrations must be submitted no later than 4pm on Mon, March 10, 2008 to Tayna B. Camacho or Ling Rabauliman at the CNMI-Diabetes Prevention and Control Program located at Navy Hill #N-16 (across the old Lighthouse). Entries may also be submitted via fax at 664-4020.

The Cook A Rainbow Challenge—Cooking from our Reefs is held in conjunction with CNMI Nutrition month and the International Year of the Reef (IYOR) celebrations. Thus, the main ingredient shall be a reef fish, from our very own pacific waters, in addition to the 'rainbow' of fruits and/or vegetables.

"We are pleased our collaborators wanted to help celebrate the Year of the Reef. Eating fish is an island favorite and is also healthy for us," said Reina Camacho, PIO for DEQ and IYOR coordinator.

The Cook A Rainbow Challenge is coordinated by the Ayuda Network, CNMI Diabetes Prevention and Control Program, NMC-CREES, PSS-Headstart, DPH-Breast and Cervical Cancer Program and the Commonwealth Cancer Association.

For more information about the Cook A Rainbow Challenge, contact Tayna or Ling at 664-4030. For information about the International Year of the Reef, contact Reina Camacho at 664-8500. ***(DEQ)***

Coral reef initiative summer internship opportunities

Several paid internships in marine resource management will be available to college students over the summer of 2008.

Interns will be placed at the Division of Environmental Quality, the Division of Fish and Wildlife, and the Coastal Resources Management Office on Saipan, in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Salary will be $7 per hour for approximately 25 hours per week. Interns will be responsible for providing their own housing and transportation.

Preference will be given to students with a long-term interest in working in the CNMI. Interns will develop and complete a project in addition to participating in ongoing activities at the host agency.

Available positions include:

EDUCATION & OUTREACH

CRM - 1 position available

The intern would work with Coral Reef Education Coordinator in the implementation of the CNMI's Rare Pride campaign, which will be running in full force by the summer of 2008.

Pride campaigns build momentum for conservation by inspiring enthusiasm and commitment in those with the most at stake: local communities and individuals who live in the earth's most ecologically valuable regions. The campaign will include face-to-face outreach and education, event planning and facilitating, media coordination, material design, production, and dispersal, in addition to many other fun and exciting CNMI-wide activities. The intern will be expected to assist in all facets of the campaign.

DEQ - 1 position available

The education& outreach intern at DEQ shall conduct door-to-door outreach to select villages on Saipan and perform weekly reading sessions at the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library. The door-to-door outreach activity shall consist of a coral reef survey by the resident/s, coral reef protection 'tips' and distribution of the coral reef 'goody bag.' The intern shall record all responses to survey and report findings in the written report and present info during presentation. The intern will be expected to assist in the pride campaign with CRM interns and staff.

DEQ - 1 position available

Position description will be available soon.

MARINE MONITORING

CRM - 2 positions available
DEQ - 1 position available

The monitoring program seeks to understand the environmental trends in CNMI's marine environments. The program secondarily tries to identify the causes of those trends. Both of these information gathering activities are used to support responsible management of local marine environments and resources.

Interns will be involved with all aspects of the monitoring program, including, but not limited to data collection, education and outreach and data management. Interns will develop, complete and present an original research project under the supervision of the CRM Biologist. Interns should be familiar with standard word processing and spreadsheet programs (e.g MS Word, Excel, etc.); and be able to swim/snorkel without assistance.

MARINE PROTECTED AREA

DFW - 1 position available

Intern will be involved with all aspects of the Marine Protected Area program, which includes collecting data from fishermen and community members regarding their awareness of MPA's. Intern will also develop a poster highlighting the importance of MPA's for elementary aged school children. Intern will conduct education and outreach via information booths in various areas around the island (super markets, docks/piers). Intern should be familiar with standard word processing and spreadsheet programs (e.g MS Word, Excel, etc.) and must be willing to work flexible shift to include some evening/weekend hours.

Interested students should submit:

1. completed CNMI Employment Application
2. letter of recommendation either from a professor or an employer,
3. resume,
4. transcript (unofficial is acceptable) and
5. statement of interest (also known as a cover letter), stating desired position(s).

Deadline: March 28, 2008. Materials can be emailed to reinacamacho@deq.gov.mp, or mailed or faxed to:

Division of Environmental Quality
Attn: Reina Camacho
P O Box 501304 Saipan, MP 96950
Fax: (670) 664-8540

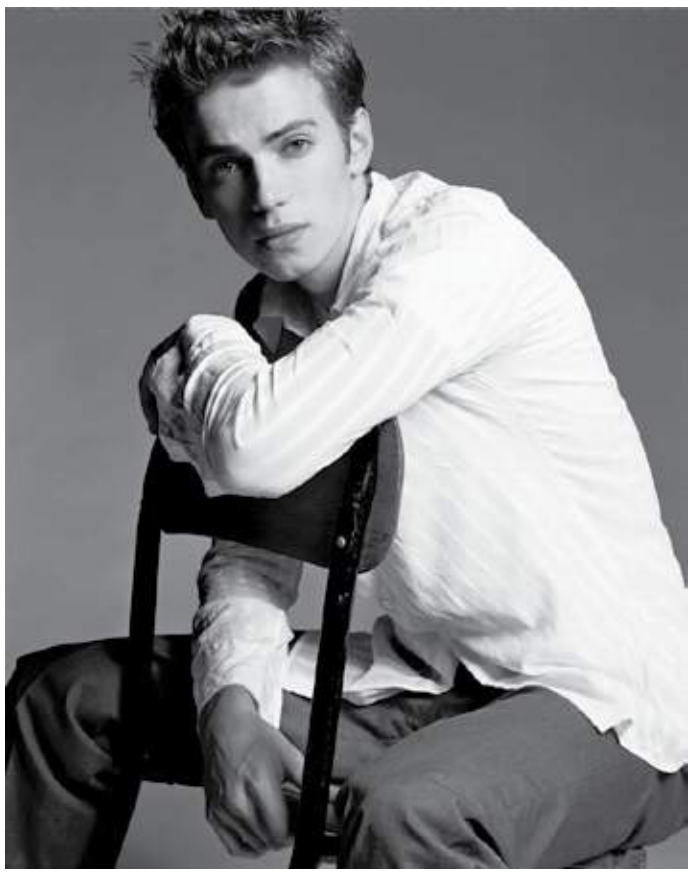
The internship shall take place June through August, but actual dates and hours worked will vary according to availability. For more information, contact Reina Camacho at (670) 664-8522.

For complete details, visit www.saipantribune.com

Life & Style

Christensen hopes to build on historic legacy

By RON DICKER
SPECIAL TO THE HARTFORD COURANT



Hayden Christensen no longer yearns to teleport himself away from interviews.

NEW YORK—Hayden Christensen no longer yearns to teleport himself away from interviews. He saves that skill for his new movie, "Jumper."

Christensen folds his 6-foot-2 frame into a cramped dressing room at MTV's "TRL" studio. He wears a black Navy peacoat throughout the interview and Chuck Taylors that probably won't touch the snowy streets outside too much. He's on a promotional whirlwind in Manhattan after junkets in London, Rome and Cairo, Egypt. Talking about himself and his movies, even in a quickie chat, is reflex now.

He occupies a significant place in cinema history, having played Anakin Skywalker and eventually his incarnation Darth Vader in the "Star Wars" prequels "Attack of the Clones" (2002) and "Revenge of the Sith" (2005).

He's probably part of cinema's future, too. Only it is far less certain what that future is. Christensen, just 26, is looking to gain traction post-George Lucas. He made a movie called "Virgin Territory," set during the plague, and its domestic release has stalled. He co-starred with Jessica Alba in the ticket-repelling "Awake."

In a slump are you, Yoda might say. "I don't really think about that stuff," Christensen says. "That's someone else's job to stress about."

"Jumper" gives the actor a high-profile chance to re-emerge as the master of his universe. It has cool-science cachet—its inhabitants can beam themselves to wherever by willing it. Its director is the cool-geeky Doug Liman, who jump-cut his way into spy-franchise prominence with 2002's "The Bourne Identity." And it gave an actor fated for the dark side in a popcorn space opera to experiment once again with being naughty, after Liman substituted him for the original actor who was cast, Tom Sturridge ("Being Julia"). Christensen's character, David, steals and shows off for his screen (and rumored real-life) girlfriend Rachel Bilson ("The O.C.") until a mysterious cop played by Samuel L. Jackson tries to stop him.

Christensen is using his already-iconic self to move and shake off-screen, too. He became a producer for the first time in developing "The Beast of Bataan," in which he also will play the lawyer for the Japanese general who led the World War II death march. "It's really just a means to be more proactive in my career," he says, "going out and getting stories that are of interest instead of waiting for them to come my way."

He got into the business by doing commercial and TV work in Toronto, then earned notices south of the border with his goth crybaby in "Life as a House" (2001). In 2003, critics cheered his portrayal of nebbish desperation as the fibbing journalist Stephen Glass in "Shattered Glass." Meanwhile, the "Star Wars" prequels gave the actor a glimpse of how quickly opinion can change. Many crucified Lucas for his wooden dialogue and Christensen for enabling it with a stiff performance.

"Obviously it's preferable when people respond to your work in a positive light," he says. "I sort of think it'll take people some time before they'll look at it with an objective perspective. Twenty years from now how people see those films and my work in those films will matter to me."

The actor says he never will escape his connection to the franchise—and that's fine. He says he is lucky to have been a part of it.

These days he does a pretty good job of escaping, period. He makes his home in Toronto and on a farm he recently bought just north of it. His best friend, Carlo, whom he has known since he was 6, is a construction worker. Carlo visits him on the set and remains unimpressed with the scene, the actor says.

"I've found my circle of friends now that will remain consistent," he says. "I think I do have a good radar for how genuine someone is."

Mary J. Blige to perform at Oscar party

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Two longtime AIDS activists are seeking to make beautiful music together on Oscar night: Mary J. Blige will join Elton John on stage for a duet at John's AIDS Foundation Academy Awards viewing party Sunday.

"Elton John is one of the most inspirational musicians and philanthropists in this industry for me," Blige said in a statement Tuesday. "I respect him with all my heart, and it is truly a pleasure to be performing with him on such an important night as we look to raise awareness and vital funds for the fight against HIV/AIDS."

Blige

John's annual Oscar party has raised more than $15 million over the past 15 years. Blige's AIDS-awareness efforts date back to 2000, when she worked with MAC Cosmetics on its Viva Glam fundraising campaign.

The "queen of hip-hop soul" has also worked with John before. He played piano on her single "Deep Inside." No word yet on what song the two will perform at the Oscar party.

AP

In this photo provided by "The Martha Stewart Show", Martha Stewart and celebrity chef Emeril Lagasse work in the kitchen for a full hour to prepare a New Orleans-style Thanksgiving dinner featuring seafood gumbo, roasted turkey breast and oyster dressing, in this Nov. 14, 2007 file photo in New York.

Martha Stewart buys Emeril franchise

NEW YORK (AP)—Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia Inc. is bringing in a new celebrity: popular TV chef Emeril Lagasse. The New York-based media and merchandising company founded by domesticity maven Martha Stewart announced Tuesday that it bought the rights to Lagasse's franchise of cookbooks, television shows and kitchen products from him for $45 million in cash and $5 million in stock.

The final price could rise to up to $70 million if certain benchmarks are achieved.

Martha Stewart did not acquire Emeril's Homebase, which includes Lagasse's 11 restaurants and corporate office.

Lagasse remains the host of the Food Network's "Essence of Emeril," but the food network channel ceased production of "Emeril Live" late last year, though it continues to air new episodes in 2008.

In a statement released Tuesday, the Food Network said, "We are happy to see that these two great brands will be combining forces and wish both of them the best. All of the Emeril's shows will remain on the network, and we also look forward to working with him on future projects."

Martha Stewart Living said the deal will "contribute immediately to our performance," adding $8 million in earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization. The acquired assets generated $14 million in revenue in 2007.

Martha Stewart Living expects the deal to close in the second quarter.

Vegas man confuses Monroe and Madonna

LAS VEGAS (AP)—Imitation can be the sincerest form of confusion.

So learned a Las Vegas man who alerted the media this week that he thought he had his hands on a rare photo of Marilyn Monroe posing nude as a hitchhiker. What he had was a famous photo of Madonna.

The image of the Material Girl, who often cast herself as a sort of latter-day Monroe, appeared in "Sex," her 1992 book of risque photography. In it, she posed in heels and handbag, with a cigarette in her mouth.

Lawrence Nicastro, 73, said he found the grainy, poster-size photo last year while going through storage items at his home in Las Vegas. He believed it had been left by a customer at his service station in the Bronx in 1962.

Nicastro and his wife, Phyllis, said they had spent about four months researching the origin of the photograph and called in Chris Harris, a publicist and Monroe expert, for help authenticating it.

Harris said it was a dead ringer for Monroe and scheduled a Wednesday news conference to unveil the image to reporters.

The two men gave The Associated Press a sneak peak Tuesday.

"You're right; it's Madonna," Harris said after being told of the mix-up. Harris said he believed someone had slipped the poster into Nicastro's storage as a prank.

"If there ever was an embarrassing moment," he said, adding that he planned to go ahead with the news conference to "face the music."

There is one person, he noted, who should feel good about the mistaken identity.

"Who wins here? Madonna, of course," Harris said. "She really looks like Marilyn Monroe."

Matlin on 'Dancing With the Stars'

LOS ANGELES (AP) -- Priscilla Presley, Kristi Yamaguchi and Marlee Matlin are catching dance fever.

They are among the dozen celebrities who will compete on the next season of "Dancing With the Stars," ABC announced Monday night.

The other contestants are Adam Carolla, Shannon Elizabeth, Steve Guttenberg, Monica Seles, Penn Jillette, Mario, Jason Taylor, Cristian De La Fuente and Marissa Jaret Winokur.

"Dancing" returns March 17.

Actress Marlee Matlin arrives at the 18th Annual GLAAD Media Awards at the Kodak Theatre in Los Angeles, in this April 14, 2007 file photo. AP

Gag order denied in Britney Spears case

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A lawyer for Britney Spears was turned down Tuesday in a bid for a gag order on attorneys in the pop star's child-custody dispute with ex-husband Kevin Federline. Superior Court Commissioner Scott Gordon rejected the request after attorney Anne Kiley argued that media coverage was "emotionally and physically" dangerous to Spears.

Federline's attorney, Mark Vincent Kaplan, contended that the absence of a gag order doesn't leave Spears' children in jeopardy and that Spears is more concerned about the paparazzi frenzy that follows her.

Kaplan noted that the paparazzi swarms existed before Spears filed for divorce in November 2006.

Neither Spears nor Federline were present at the hearing.

Spears has not been allowed to see sons Jayden James, 1, and Sean Preston, 2, since an incident at her home that led to the first of her two hospitalizations in a psychiatric facility this year and a decision by another court to put her father, James Spears, in charge of her affairs.

Outside court, Kaplan told reporters that Federline would like the singer to see her children.

"Both sides want to see the day that visitation can resume. It's a question of working out the details of how that can happen," said Kaplan. "Mr. Federline looks forward to his children having their mom in their life."

The gag order request was discussed in open court before other issues were taken behind closed doors.

Kiley said she wanted a "narrowly tailored" order that would only restrict attorneys from speaking to the media.

Kaplan, who frequently speaks to reporters outside the courthouse after hearings, told Gordon he only summarizes what went on in court when the commissioner allows it and he never discusses the children's whereabouts or schedules.

Kiley also argued that media vehicles and cameras outside the courthouse were "distressing because of other people trying to use the courthouse."

"And you think this order would fix that?" asked Gordon.

"I think the First Amendment is important but this is about the practical aspects of the case," said Kiley.

The commissioner said the public has a right to know court orders. He agreed that public safety and access to the courthouse was a concern but "that's a law enforcement issue."

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The Spiderwick Chronicles

Friday		4:00	7:20	9:30
Sat & Sun	1:00	4:00	7:20	9:30
Monday	1:00	4:00	7:20	
Tue thru Thurs		4:00	7:20	

Seth Rogen, Mary-Loise Parker
Fantasy, Children • Rated PG13

Synopsis
Peculiar things start to happen the moment the Grace family (Jared, his twin brother Simon, sister Mallory and their mom) leave New York and move into the secluded old house owned by their great, great uncle Arthur Spiderwick. Unable to explain the strange disappearances and accidents that seem to be happening on a daily basis, the family blames Jared. When he, Simon and Mallory investigate what"s really going on, they uncover the fantastic truth of the Spiderwick estate and of the creatures that inhabit it.

Jumper

Friday		4:05	7:25	9:40
Sat & Sun	1:05	4:05	7:25	9:40
Monday	1:05	4:05	7:25	
Tue thru Thurs		4:05	7:25	

Hayden Christensen, Samuel L. Jackson
Adventure, Sci-Fi • Rated PG13

Synopsis
David Rice has grown up with a mysterious power of which many have dreamed. He is completely and utterly mobile, able to zap through wormholes in the space-time fabric to any city, any building, any place at all that his mind desires. In the blink of an eye, he can "jump" from one side of the earth to the other and back again—he can tour twenty different sunsets in one night, he can have breakfast on the Egyptian Sphinx, spend the day surfing in Australia, then pop over to Paris for dinner and enjoy dessert in Japan.

★ ★ ★

Fool's Gold

Friday		4:10	7:15	10:00
Sat & Sun	1:20	4:10	7:15	10:00
Monday	1:20	4:10	7:15	
Tue thru Thurs		4:10	7:15	

Matthew McConaughey, Kate Hudson
Action, Adventure • Rated PG13

Welcome Home Roscoe Jenkins

Friday		4:25	7:30	9:50
Sat & Sun	1:25	4:25	7:30	9:50
Monday	1:25	4:25	7:30	
Tue thru Thurs		4:25	7:30	

Martin Lawrence, Louis C.K.
Comedy • Rated PG13

Meet the Spartans

Friday		4:20	7:10	9:35
Sat & Sun	1:15	4:20	7:10	9:35
Monday	1:15	4:20	7:10	
Tue thru Thurs		4:20	7:10	

Diedrich Bader, Kevin Sorbo
Comedy • Rated PG13

Sakal, Sakali, Saklolo

Friday		4:30	7:05	9:55
Sat & Sun	1:30	4:30	7:05	9:55
Monday	1:30	4:30	7:05	
Tue thru Thurs		4:30	7:05	

Judy Ann Santos, Ryan Agoncillo
Comedy, Romance • Rated NR

Cloverfield

Friday		@	7:00	9:45
Sat & Sun	@	@	7:00	9:45
Monday	@	@	7:00	
Tue thru Thurs		@	7:00	

Michael Stahl David, Mike Vogel
Comedy, Drama • Rated PG13

27 Dresses

Friday		4:15	@	@
Sat & Sun	1:10	4:15	@	@
Monday	1:10	4:15	@	
Tue thru Thurs		4:15	@	

Katherine Heigl, James Marsden
Romantic Comedy • Rated PG13

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Wilson to begin work on 'Marley & Me'

AP

Owen Wilson arrives at the premiere of "The Wendell Baker Story" in Beverly Hills, Calif., in this May 10, 2007, file photo.

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Owen Wilson is going back to work for the first time since his reported suicide attempt last summer.

Wilson, 39, and co-star Jennifer Aniston begin shooting March 10 on 20th Century Fox's "Marley & Me," the studio said. It tells the tale of a couple who adopt a dog to give parenthood a trial run, then find the mischievous pooch more than they bargained for.

After he was hospitalized last August, Wilson dropped out of this summer's comedy "Tropic Thunder," which already had been in production. He was replaced by Matthew McConaughey.

Due out Christmas Day, "Marley & Me" is directed by David Frankel and based on the book by John Grogan. Alan Arkin co-stars.

911 tape: Renfro's girlfriend tried CPR

LOS ANGELES (AP)—According to a 911 call released by fire officials, Brad Renfro's girlfriend tried to revive the troubled actor after finding him unresponsive at his Los Angeles home. On the recording, a woman tells a dispatcher she's been trying to wake up Renfro for an audition but he won't move.

She says Renfro's nose is bleeding and mentions he may have taken a few pills the night before. She tries to give him CPR after being instructed to do so by the dispatcher before paramedics arrive.

Fire officials released the tape Tuesday.

Renfro died Jan. 15 of an overdose of heroin and morphine. He had publicly struggled with drugs and alcohol.

Actor Brad Renfro is shown in this Oct. 18, 2004, file photo in New York. AP

Pink and racer hubby Carey Hart split up

NEW YORK (AP)—Pink and motocross racer Carey Hart have separated after two years of marriage. "This decision was made by best friends with a huge amount of love and respect for one another," Pink's representative, Michele Schweitzer, said Tuesday in a statement. "While the marriage is over, their friendship has never been stronger."

Pink, whose real name is Alecia Moore, met Hart at the 2001 X Games in Las Vegas and proposed to him four years later during a race in Mammoth Lakes, Calif. They were married Jan. 7, 2006, in Costa Rica.

Pink, 28, won a Grammy for best female rock vocal performance for her song "Trouble" in 2003. Her hits include "Get the Party Started," "Stupid Girls" and "Don't Let Me Get Me."

AP

Carey Hart, left, and wife Pink arrive for the 49th Annual Grammy Awards in this Feb. 11, 2007, file photo in Los Angeles.

Little Richard gets standing ovation

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP)—Little Richard got a standing ovation at the Ryman Auditorium - and he didn't even perform.

The 75-year-old rock 'n' roll pioneer was seated at the rear of the auditorium during a concert by 1960s Motown stalwarts The Temptations and the Four Tops.

He got an extended ovation from the sold-out crowd of about 2,400 Sunday night after being introduced by Otis Williams, an original member of The Temptations.

"We've done some shows together," Williams said.

Little Richard, a native of Macon, Ga., now lives in Tennessee.

He recently performed with Jerry Lee Lewis and John Fogerty on the Grammy Awards.

Ryman Auditorium is the original home of the Grand Ole Opry.

In stunt, 'GMA' host jumps from building

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. (AP)—To conquer his fear of heights, "Good Morning America" host Chris Cuomo jumped from the roof of an Atlantic City casino Tuesday morning.

As part of the ABC morning show's series about overcoming fears, Cuomo and a stunt coordinator used cables to zip nearly 40 stories down the side of the Trump Taj Mahal.

The stunt was carried live on "Good Morning America" as a crowd of onlookers cheered from the ground.

Before the trick, Cuomo told himself he was on "an elevator with no walls."

And after?

Cuomo, the son of former New York Gov. Mario Cuomo, says he was happy he did it.

Girlfriend's weight doesn't mean she'll never find love

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: Although I agree with you that "'Dee'-Voted Friend in D.C." (Dec. 26) needs to stop lying to her friend and building up false hopes, I think you missed the mark with the rest of your advice.

Believe me, Dee knows she's overweight and that it's negatively affecting her social life. She's just not ready to deal with it.

"Dee-Voted" didn't indicate that Dee has even asked for her advice or help, so maybe she should consider her own motivation. Does she really just want to help her friend, or does she want Dee to conform to her standards?

Abby, friendship is acceptance. If she's truly a friend, "Dee-Voted" will simply enjoy Dee and remain supportive until that special guy who can appreciate her comes along. Believe me, he's out there.

—G.D. IN BOZEMAN, MONT.

DEAR G.D.: You make a valid point. Although most of those who responded disagreed with my advice to "Dee-Voted," I feel it is important to address the issue of the health risks -- heart disease, diabetes, stroke, joint pain -- related to people who are overweight or obese. Read on:

DEAR ABBY: As a chubby person myself, I'm sick and tired of the myth that extra pounds mean you can't find love. I have never been a thin person, but I've rarely been a single person.

I firmly believe that there is a shoe for every foot, and finding that shoe has more to do with having confidence and being true to yourself than being thin. I have known many women who have lost 50 pounds or more only to find the problem wasn't their appearance. It was something much deeper in their personalities.

If Dee is striking out with the men in her life, my advice is to look in a different social circle for a date. If the men she's aiming for can't see past her size, I'm not sure why she'd want to be with them anyway.

—CHUBBY AND LOVED, ALEXANDRIA, VA.

DEAR ABBY: Do you think Dee isn't aware she's overweight? I'm a lot like her, only I'm 100 pounds overweight.

Dee should drop this "friend." Nobody needs friends who are condescending or pity them. Instead of trying to find a man in a bar or restaurant, where appearance is all that is considered, she should try other avenues.

There's plenty of love for everybody, and chances are it's not only her weight that's keeping the right men away. For me, it was the chip on my shoulder—the belief that I wasn't good enough because I was fat. Once I made peace with that, I've had them ...

KNOCKING DOWN MY DOOR IN MICHIGAN

DEAR ABBY: There's no way to delude yourself into thinking you're not fat if you are. Dee is reminded of that fact when she goes to the mall and shops in plus-size stores and departments. She knows what's reflected in the mirror.

I've been fat all my life, and I have never lacked for male companionship when I really wanted it. Dee needs to believe that she's beautiful, talented and funny, and that she is worthy of love and respect, no matter what size her jeans are. When that happens, she'll find "Mr. Right."

—PLUS-SIZE AND HAPPY

DEAR ABBY: Many cultures embrace being plus-sized as a beautiful thing. As a man, I would choose a larger woman over a "twig" any day of the week. Dee is beautiful regardless of weight. One day someone like me will come along and prove that she is loved for who she is.

—ERIC IN COLORADO

■ ■ ■

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

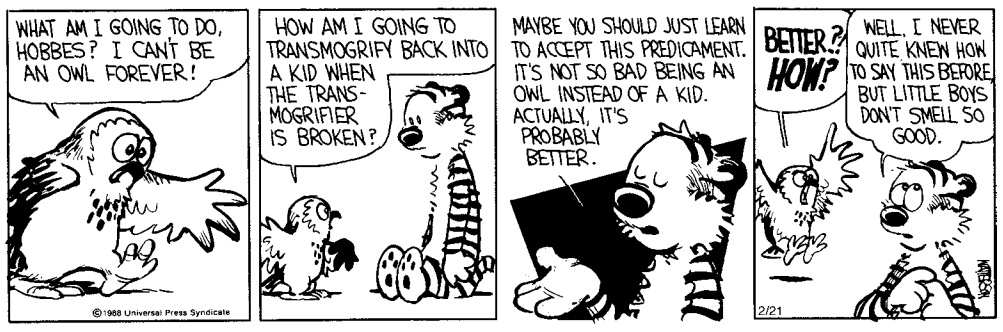
■ ■ ■

What teens need to know about sex, drugs, AIDS and getting along with peers and parents is in "What Every Teen Should Know." To order, send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $6 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Teen Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


WHAT AM I GOING TO DO, HOBBES? I CAN'T BE AN OWL FOREVER!
HOW AM I GOING TO TRANSMOGRIFY BACK INTO A KID WHEN THE TRANS-MOGRIFIER IS BROKEN?
MAYBE YOU SHOULD JUST LEARN TO ACCEPT THIS PREDICAMENT. IT'S NOT SO BAD BEING AN OWL INSTEAD OF A KID. ACTUALLY, IT'S PROBABLY BETTER.
BETTER?! HOW?
WELL, I NEVER QUITE KNEW HOW TO SAY THIS BEFORE, BUT LITTLE BOYS DON'T SMELL SO GOOD.
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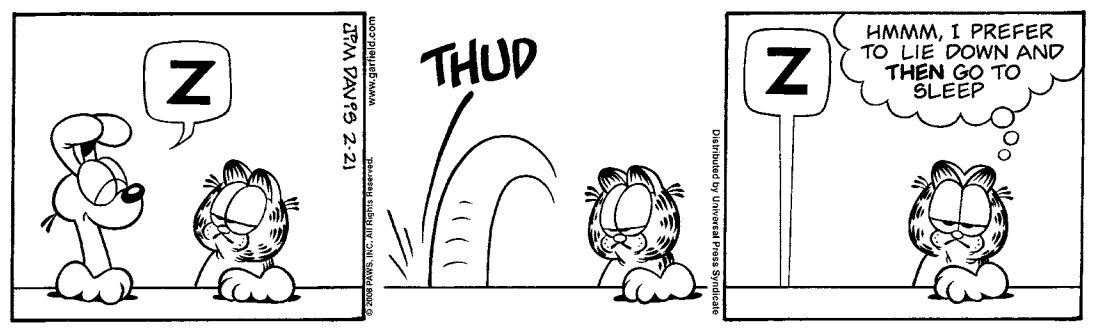
2/21

Garfield®

By Jim Davis



Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

The don'ts of a successful home-based or small business.
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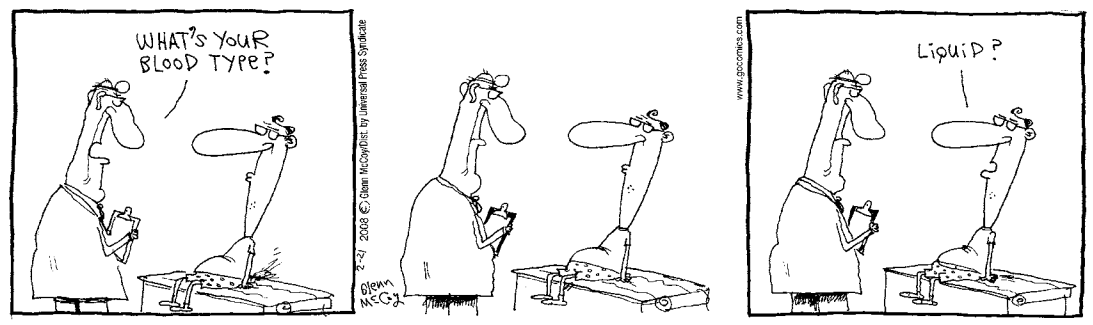
The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Resistance measure
4 Lion's pride?
8 Dietary supplement
12 Zodiac sign
13 On the Mediterranean
14 North Carolina senator
15 Tennis tactic
17 Christmas
18 "To be or — ..."
19 Atomic, as weaponry
21 Spirit of friendship?
24 Crony
25 Essen expletive
26 Bad hairpiece
28 Sitcom sample
32 EPA concern
34 Auction action
36 Where Manilow's Lola worked
37 Aquarium favorite
39 Pinch
41 Siesta
42 Literary collection
44 Nonflying flock
46 Deutsche mark fraction
50 Wrong (Prefix)
51 Not pizzicato
52 Photo
56 Willy Wonka creator
57 See 1-Down
58 Man-mouse link
59 Old portico
60 Basin accessory
61 Cowboy nickname

DOWN
1 With 57-Across, partner of "Arsenic"
2 That woman
3 Apollo 11 launch
4 Learn thoroughly
5 Tray contents
6 Inert gas
7 Consume fully
8 Pastoral
9 Libertine
10 Earthenware pot
11 — -do-well
16 Burst
20 Upper limit
21 Group of actors
22 Pinnacle
23 Abrade
27 Card-table call
29 Unlikely winner
30 October birthstone
31 Recording
33 Type of snack bar
35 Understand
38 Raggedy doll
40 Molly-coddle
43 Supermarket section
45 Joe's compatriots?
46 Skateboarders' protection
47 Campus group
48 Reverberate
49 Eat away at
53 Expert
54 Raw rock
55 April payment

Solution time: 25 mins.

D	O	M	■	H	E	A	R	■	S	K	I	P	
R	U	E	■	G	A	L	A	■	A	O	N	E	
A	C	T	■	W	R	E	S	T	L	I	N	G	
T	H	E	M	E	■	■	P	R	O	■	■	■	
■	■	■	■	E	L	L	A	■	Y	O	K	E	L
J	O	S	T	L	I	N	G	■	N	E	R	O	
A	D	A	■	S	O	D	A	S	■	P	I	N	
M	I	N	G	■	N	E	S	T	L	I	N	G	
B	E	G	O	T	■	S	H	O	E	■	■	■	
■	■	■	D	O	C	■	■	P	I	T	C	H	
W	H	I	S	T	L	I	N	G	■	I	R	A	
A	U	T	O	■	A	R	E	A	■	F	E	Z	
N	E	O	N	■	W	E	E	P	■	F	E	Y	

Yesterday's answer 2-21

1	2	3	■	4	5	6	7	■	8	9	10	11
12			■	13				■	14			
15			16					■	17			
■	■	18			■	19		20				
21	22				23	■	24			■	■	■
25			■	26		27	■	28		29	30	31
32			33	■	34		35	■	36			
37				38	■	39		40	■	41		
■	■	■	42		43	■	44		45			
46	47	48				49	■	50			■	■
51				■	52		53				54	55
56					57				■	58		
59				■	60				■	61		

STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Charlotte Church, 22; Jennifer Love Hewitt, 29; Kelsey Grammer, 53; Tyne Daly, 62

Happy Birthday: Stick what you do best and work it to your advantage. If you are intent on making progress, that's exactly what you will do. Broaden your horizons and open your mind to the unique and the unusual. You will be able to develop something that works splendidly for you. Your numbers are 4, 15, 24, 38, 42, 44

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Someone may try to outmaneuver you if you aren't careful. Don't overreact. Once you establish your position, you will have more freedom to manipulate things in your favor. ✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Do things that will bring you in touch with interesting people, projects or activities. Today, you can benefit from the people you meet and the experience you have. A new outlook will lead to a well-informed you. ✪✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): If you leave a good impression by showing how dedicated you are, you will prosper. Take the initiative. No matter what you are trying to accomplish, being proactive will bring positive results. ✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): There is plenty to be gained from new partnerships or taking a personal relationship to the next level. Change is good and can benefit you if you don't start complaining about what it takes to enforce it. ✪✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): You'll be charming, entertaining and quite detached from what's going on around you. A good job will impress the people you work with but don't be fooled into thinking you will reap the rewards without continuous effort. ✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): As much as you try to fight it, emotional matters will surface. Use this opportunity to inform everyone of how you feel and what you want to see happen. The response you get will allow you to clear up any uncertainty. ✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Love is in the stars and travel, even if a short distance, should be on your agenda. A new hobby, creative project or getting out with friends will lead to new beginnings. You will have plenty of options but will do best with the ones that keep you most active. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Lean toward the unusual and you will get past all the personal pitfalls. Engage in renovations, redecorating or making a physical move that will remove you from some of the problems you have been facing. Act on your gut feelings. ✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): It will be up to you to get things underway. Plan an adventure, visit an exotic destination or open your heart to someone you want to get to know better. Now is the perfect time to let your imagination run wild. ✪✪

CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Put your finances in order and implement the changes you want to see happen professionally, financially and personally. Home improvement projects or improving your living arrangements will fall into place. A lifestyle change will improve health. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Getting involved in a cause is what you need in order to redeem yourself, in your own mind, for past mistakes. You have more to offer than you realize and can help someone who is traveling a path you once took. Offer your services. ✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Take on extra work if it will help you seal a deal or advance. Don't leave anything undone or for someone else to take care of. Be responsible and you will have no regrets. Stay calm. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are passionate, particular and patient. You are intelligent, intuitive and able to see clearly what needs to be done. You are a reformist and a humanitarian.

Eugenia's Web sites: **astroadvice.com** *for fun,* **eugenialast.com** *for confidential consultations*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

	1							
			2		9	3		1
	6	2	4			9		
	3			8		7	4	
	9	8		2			5	
		1			6	5	9	
8		4	9		7			
							7	

Difficulty Level ★★★ 2/21

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

2	5	1	8	9	7	4	3	6
6	3	9	2	1	4	7	5	8
4	8	7	6	5	3	9	2	1
7	6	3	5	4	8	2	1	9
9	4	2	7	3	1	8	6	5
5	1	8	9	2	6	3	7	4
1	2	5	4	7	9	6	8	3
8	7	4	3	6	5	1	9	2
3	9	6	1	8	2	5	4	7

Difficulty Level ★★★ 2/20

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

UNDERWATER PHOTOGRAPHY **Solution: 5 letters**

L	C	M	S	H	S	I	F	O	C	U	S	H	F	D
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A	Q	A	P	(E)	A	S	T	N	P	R	N	D	T	E
V	U	S	M	(R)	T	A	I	X	T	G	I	J	A	V
I	I	T	A	R	R	H	E	I	L	S	D	U	W	D
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Adjust, Adventure, Album, Amphibious, Angle, Article, Base, Blue, Capture, Caves, Clear, Contrast, Depth, Distance, Dive, Documentary, Dolphin, Equipment, Exposure, Film, Filter, Fish, Focus, Gear, Images, Life, Light, Nature, Ocean, Plants, Portraits, Rare, Reef, Safety, Scuba, Skill, Small, Strobe, Swim, Tropical, Vacation, Visible, Waterproof, Whales

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CLASSIFIED ADS

CLASSIFIEDS RATES AND POLICIES

Saipan Tribune's Classifieds Section gives you the right exposure without hurting your pockets. Stretch your dollar and get results.

CLASSIFIED ADS

Saipan Tribune also offers a Super Saver Package—a complete 7-day run on both print and online edition, for as low as $25 per 3 liner ad for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of below packages that fits your budget.

ADS (7DAYS)	COMBO (PRINT AND ONLINE)
• 3-Liner	$25
• 5-Liner	$35
• 3-Liner with picture	$45
• 5-Liner with picture	$55

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

All job vacancy announcements will be published for two issues in each of two successive weeks.

1st position	**$13.00**
2nd position	**$5.00**
Succeeding positions	**$2.00**

These rates apply to all job vacancy announcements in Saipan that include corresponding benefits and which positions are all under the same company name and dba.

Newspaper clippings are also available for $.25 per copy.

ADVERTISING DEADLINE

Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

Job Vacancy Announcements

Monday Through Friday Issues: All ads placed before 12 noon will come out the next publication date.

Saturday And Sunday Issues:
- *Saipan Tribune:* All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on either Sunday or Monday issues.

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

Job Vacancy Announcements

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

CHECK YOUR ADS

Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

ADVERTISING POLICY

All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

FOR SALE - COMMERCIAL

Bud's Bar For Sell. $20,000 or best offer. You must see to appreciate. #898-4866/233-1113

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Accountant • $5.50/hr
Hanmi Professional Services
(6F Nauru Bldg.)
Tel.: 234-3010/235-3010
E-mail: hps@hanmisaipan.com

FOR RENT - RESIDENTIAL

Apartment room for rent: Fully furnished 1 brm, T/B, 24-hr water $210/month, near Conwood | Tel. 287-1372, 235-6748

Apartment for Rent in Aslito. Fully furnished, 24 hrs water. Safe location. Call 256-3864/287-7769

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Long time no see

LSG Sky Chefs
WANTED
- **COOK**
- **KITCHEN HELPER**

Applications are available at LSG Sky Chefs main office Airport Road.
TEL.: 234-8258

MARIANAS PUBLIC LAND TRUST
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

NOTICE OF REGULAR MEETING

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 11, The Open Government Act of 1992, the Marianas Public Land Trust have scheduled a Board of Trustees Regular Meeting for **Thursday, February 21, 2008 beginning at 6:00 PM at the Plumeria Room, Saipan World Resort; Saipan, MP**.

Original Date: February 15, 2008
Original Location: Plumeria Room, Saipan World Resort

The following agenda is hereby established:

I PRELIMINARIES
- Call to Order
- Roll Call
- Adoption of Agenda
- Adoption of Minutes

II CONSULTANT REPORTS
- Legal Counsel Reports*
- Loan Administrator Reports
  - Transition Matters
- Investment Consultant Reports
  - Flash Reports – January 2007
- Board Consultant Reports
  - Financial Statements – January 2007

III CHAIRMAN'S REPORT
- Administrative Matters

IV OLD BUSINESS

V NEW BUSINESS

VI EXECUTIVE SESSION

At anytime during this scheduled meeting, the Board of Trustees may be required to enter into Executive Session to discuss matters deemed privileged and confidential.

VII MISCELLANEOUS

VIII ADJOURNMENT

* It is anticipated that the following matters will be discussed under Executive Session in its entirety.

In accordance with Public Law 8-41, additional agenda items may be added to the above listing only by the recorded vote of the majority of the trustee governing body.

All interested persons are welcome to attend and to submit written and oral testimony on the above agenda items.

/s/ Alvaro A. Santos
Chairman, Board of Trustees

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ENTURY

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JOB OPPORTUNITIES

1 POWER HOUSE MECHANIC (TH 4706)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arrange housing; medical insurance & worker compensation. Contact: Heroge Ent., Inc. dba Diesel Equip Service Retail Diesel Equip @234-3588.

1 SALES REPRESENTATIVE (TH 4707)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self housing; self food; worker compensation & medical insurance. Contact: Heroge Ent., Inc. dba Mountain Fresh Water. @234-3588.

1 NURSERY SCHOOL ATTENDANT (TH 4708)
Salary:$3.55-$4.00/hour. Benefits: Workers compensation & medical expense reimbursable. Contact: Golden Harvest Int'l School dba School @235-4655.

1 ACCOUNTANT (TH 4709)
Salary:$3.55-$9.00/hour. Benefits: Workers compensation; life insurance & medical. Contact: Saipan Shipping Company, Inc. @322-9706/07.

1 WAITRESS/WAITER (TH 4710)
Salary:$3.05-$3.10/hour. Benefits: Workers compensation & medical expenses company provided. Contact: Kumanomi Island Co., Ltd. @233-6298.

1 SUPERVISOR (TH 4711)
Salary:$3.05/hour. Benefits: Workers compensation & medical expenses company provided. Contact: J.T.M. Corporation @233-5436.

2 WAITRESS/WAITER (TH 4712)
Salary:$3.05-$3.55/hour. Benefits: Workers compensation & medical expenses company provided. Contact: J.T.M. Corporation @233-5436.

Keola Schupi Seman Wabol
P.O. 500865 CK
Saipan, MP 96950-0865
(670) 288-6328

PRO SE

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE MATTER OF: KEOLA FLORANN SEMAN FITIAL, Petitioner.	**FCD FG CIVIL ACTION NO. 08-083** **NOTICE OF HEARING**

Notice is hereby given that the above-entitled matter is set for a hearing on February 25, 2008, at 1:30 p.m. in Courtroom 205, before Associate Judge Kenneth L. Govendo.

Bernadita A. Sablan
Clerk of Court

/s/ By: Deputy Clerk of Court

1 SALES REPRESENTATIVE (TH 4713)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Workers compensation & medical expenses company provided. Contact: Nippon General Trading Corp. @233-8223.

1 COOK (TH 4714)
Salary:$3.05-$3.55/hour. Benefits: Company provided housing; workers compensation & medical expenses company provided. Contact: M Samwa Planning Ltd. @235-7102.

1 GRAPHIC ARTIST (TH 4715)
Salary:$3.05-$3.55/hour. Benefits: Workers compensation & medical expenses company provided. Contact: Asia Pacific Industries Inc. @233-9219.

2 COOK (TH 4716)
Salary:$3.05-$3.30/hour. Benefits: Workers compensation & medical expenses company provided. Contact: Kei Enterprises Co., Ltd. @234-3038.

1 MANAGER (TH 4717)
Salary:$3.05/hour. Benefits: Workers compensation & medical benefits. Contact: Sterling Corporation @233-7766.

1 ART TEACHER (TH 4718)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Workers compensation & medical insurance. Contact: Chinese Bible Church Int'l Inc. dba Eucon International School @234-3203.

1 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT (TH 4719)
Salary:$795.66/monthly. Benefits: Workers compensation & medical insurance. Contact: CWM International Inc. dba Eucon International College @234-3203.

1 SALES REPRESENTATIVE (TH 4720)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self provided housing; self provided food; medical; surety bond & worksmen compensation. Contact: ASG Corporation dba Elite Printing @288-6465.

1 EDITOR (TH 4721)
Salary:$1,000.00/montly. Benefits: $50.00/housing deduction; self provided food; surety bond; medical & worksmen compensation. Contact: ASG Corporation dba Island Locator @288-6465.

1 ADMIN. ASSISTANT (TH 4722)
Salary:$4.05-$5.00/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self arranged food; medical & workers compensation provided by employer. Contact: Anthony C. Ayuyu @285-5173

1 COOK (TH 4723)
Salary:$3.55-$4.45/hour. Benefits: housing company provided at a charge $30.00/month; workers compensation company provided; medical expenses company provided. Contact: Nippon General Trading Corp. @233-8223.

1 WAITRESS/WAITER (TH 4724)
Salary:$3.55-$3.85/hour. Benefits: housing company provided at a charge $30.00/month; workers compensation company provided; medical expenses company provided. Contact: Nippon General Trading Corp. @233-8223.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

1 SCUBA DIVING INSTRUCTOR (TH 4725)
Salary:$800.00/monthly. Benefit: medical expenses employer provided; workers compensation employer provided. Contact: Sealovers Saipan Inc. @233-5219.

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1 BUILDING MAINTENANCE REPAIRER (TH 4726)
Salary:$3.05-$3.55/hour. Benefit: workers compensation company provided; medical expenses company provided. Contact: J.T.M. Corporation @233-5436.

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1 INTERPRETER (TH 4727)
Salary:$3.55-$6.00/hour. Benefit: housing $150.00 allowance; workers compensation; medical insurance. Contact: Anthony R. Stearns, MD dba Marianas Medical Center @234-3926.

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1 COMMERCIAL CLEANER (TH 4748)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefit: housing none/self provided; food none/self provided; workers compensation and medical provided. Contact: Sablan Topline Company, LLC @235-5206.

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1 ACCOUNTANT (TH 4749)
Salary:$4.50/hour. Benefit: free medical expenses; free workers compensation insurance. Contact: Multi Business Corp. dba Accounting Service, Video Haus, VH Mini Mart, C3 Wholesale Seafood @233-5397.

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3 CUTTER (TH 4750)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefit: housing self; food self; company provided workers comp.; medical expenses. Contact: Yong Jih Corp. @288-3889.

9 HAND SEWER (TH 4751)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefit: housing self; food self; company provided workers comp.; medical expenses. Contact: Yong Jih Corp. @288-3889.

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1 COOK HELPER (TH 4752)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefit: medical; workers compensation provided. Contact: Bobbie's Amusement Co. Inc. dba Bobbie's Café @235-2624.

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1 COMMERCIAL CLEANER (TH 4753)
Salary:$3.55-$4.25/hour. Benefit: housing self arranged; food self arranged; free medical expense; workers compensation. Contact: United International Corporation @235-6888/7888.

3 HAND PACKER (TH 4754)
Salary:$3.55-$4.25/hour. Benefit: housing self arranged; food self arranged; free medical expense; workers compensation. Contact: United International Corporation @235-6888/7888.

1 WAREHOUSE WORKER (TH 4755)
Salary:$3.55-$4.25/hour. Benefit: housing self arranged; food self arranged; free medical expense; workers compensation. Contact: United International Corporation @235-6888/7888.

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1 COMMERCIAL CLEANER (TH 4756)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefit: housing not provided; food not provided; medical; workers compensation provided. Contact: Pacific Saipan, LLC. Dba Sign Arts @483-1000.

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1 BUILDING MAINTENANCE (TH 4757)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefit: housing employee provided; food employee provided; the workers compensation insurance & medical expenses are employer provided. Contact: Hiron Mollah dba Mollah Enterprises @234-3015/285-5547.

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1 RESERVATIONS AGENT

(TH 4758)
Salary:$6.00/hour. Benefit: housing self arranged; food self arranged; medical; workers compensation. Contact: Sandcastle Saipan, LLC @233-7263.

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1 COMPUTER PROGRAMMER (TH 4759)
Salary:$3.55-$4.00/hour. Benefit: housing self arranged; food self arranged; medical; workers compensation. Contact: Danilo T. Aguilar dba Law Office of Danilo T. Aguilar @234-8801/235-5466.

1 HOUSE WORKER (TH 4760)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefit: housing self arranged; food self arranged; medical. Contact: Danilo T. Aguilar dba Law Office of Danilo T. Aguilar @234-8801/235-5466.

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1 WAITER/SERVER/WAITRESS (TH 4761)
Salary:$4.10/hour. Benefit: housing self arranged; food 2 duty meals; medical insurance; vacation leave; workers compensation. Contact: WDI Saipan, Inc. dba Tony Roma's/ Capricciosa @322-7516.

1 KITCHEN SUPERVISOR (TH 4762)
Salary:$4.70/hour. Benefit: housing self arranged; food 2 duty meals; medical insurance; vacation leave; workers compensation. Contact: WDI Saipan, Inc. dba Tony Roma's/Capricciosa @322-7516.

1 RESTAURANT MANAGER (GENERAL) (TH 4763)
Salary:$1,770.83/BI-WEEKLY. Benefit: housing self arranged; food 2 duty meals; medical insurance; vacation leave; workers compensation. Contact: WDI Saipan, Inc. dba Tony Roma's/Capricciosa @322-7516.

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1 WAITRESS/WAITER (TH 4764)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefit: medical insurance; workers comp. Contact: American K&W Corp. @233-9468.

1 WAITRESS/WAITER (TH 4765)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefit: medical insurance; workers comp. Contact: American K&W Corp. @233-9468.

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1 ASSISTANT RESTAURANT MANAGER (TH 4766)
Salary:$461.54/bi-weekly. Benefit: housing free if no A/C; medical insurance; vacation leave; workers compensation. Contact: Triple J Saipan, Inc. dba Truong's Restaurant @234-1795.

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1 PASSENGER SERVICE AGENT (TTH 0001)
Salary:$3.55-$4.05/HOUR. Benefits: Self-arranged housing; self-provided food; medical & workers compensation employers provided. Contact: Pacific Oriental Inc. @ 288-0360 TO 0362.

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1 MAINTENANCE REPAIRER (THS 0001)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self provided housing; self provided food; workmen's compensation and work related medical expense to be provided by the company. Contact: Mugen Corporation @ 323-9238.

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1 CASHIER (THS 0002)
Salary:$3.05/hour. Benefits: Worksman compensation & medical. Contact: McMillan Corporation/ James McMillan dba J & N Mini Mart @ 322-4616.

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1 ACCOUNTANT (THS 0003)
Salary:$800.00-$1,000.00/monthly. Benefits: Medical insurance; vacation leave; sick leave & worksman compensation. Contact: Western Sales Trading Company @ 322-6031.

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1 BEAUTICIAN (THS 0004)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self-arranged housing; self-provided food; medical & workers compensation provided by employer. Contact: Hen Qi Li Corp. @ 235-6891.

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1 MASON (THS 0005)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical & workers insurance. Contact: Universal Development Inc. @ 322-5881.

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1 DRESSMAKER (THS 0006)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self-arranged housing; self-provided food; medical & workers compensation provided by employer. Contact: Hong Fu, Inc. db Dress Shop @ 233-6160 / 287-5998.

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Northern Mariana Islands RETIREMENT FUND

PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to 1 CMC, Division 9, §9910, Governor Benigno R. Fitial and Lt. Governor Timothy P. Villagomez, through the NMI Retirement Fund Board of Trustees/Workers' Compensation Commission/Group Health & Life Insurance Trust Fund, are hereby giving notice that the Board of Trustees will hold a Special meeting on **Friday, February 22, 2008 at 9:00 a.m.** at the NMI Retirement Fund Conference Room, Saipan.

AGENDA

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS
- A. Call to Order
- B. Roll Call
- C. Adoption of Agenda

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS

III. OLD BUSINESS
- A. Hearing Officer RFP

IV. EXECUTIVE SESSION

V. MISCELLANEOUS
- A. Announcement(s)
- B. Next Meeting
- C. Adjournment

/s/ JUAN T. GUERRERO
CHAIRMAN, BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Northern Marianas College
Procurement & Property Management Office

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
RFP 08-010
Purchase and Installation of Air Conditioning System

Northern Marianas College is soliciting competitive sealed proposals for the purchase and installation of Air Conditioning Systems. Specifications and Scope of Work packages may now be picked up at the **NMC Procurement Office, Bldg. L, 2nd Floor, Monday to Friday between the hours of 8: 30-11:30 a.m. and 1:00-4:00 p.m**. There may be a fee when picking up a package. Please call 234-5498 ext. 2300/01/02 for information regarding fees.

Proposal Packages are due no later than March 7th, 2008 at 4:00 p.m. Saipan time at the Northern Marianas College, As Terlaje Campus, Procurement Office, Bldg. L, 2nd Floor, Saipan, MP 96950. Article 7, "**Local Business Preference**", as amended by Public Laws 15-95 and as further amended by Public Law 15-118, is available to local vendors in this procurement. **For Proposers located outside of the CNMI**: You may request a copy of the RFP via fax (670) 235-7601 or e-mail to Duane R.T. Sablan (duanes@nmcnet.edu). There may be a processing fee.

Proposers are advised that this project is subject to compliance with the Davis-Bacon Act and the labor standard provisions for wage rate determination of the Commonwealth. All labor on the project shall be paid no less than the minimum wage rate of $3.55 per hour which took effect on July 25, 2007 as established by Federal law including subsequent increases of $.50 per hour every six (6) months (or next effective dates) until the hourly rate equals that of the Federal Minimum Wage of $7.50 per hour.

All Proposers are hereby notified that the Northern Marianas College will affirmatively insure that in any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, women and small business enterprises will be afforded full opportunity to submit proposals and will not be discriminated against on grounds of race, color, national origin, political affiliation, creed, sex, religion, age, familial status, and disability status.

This solicitation does not constitute an offer and does not obligate the College in any way. The NMC reserves the right to reject any and/or all proposals for any reason and waive any defect in said proposals, or cancel in part or its entirety this RFP, if it deems, in its sole discretion, it is in the best interest of the College. All costs incurred by the proposer to prepare a response this solicitation and subsequent inquiries shall be borne by the proposer. All submittals shall become the property of NMC and will not be returned.

Approved by the following:

/s/ Duane R.T. Sablan
NMC Procurement & Property
Property Management Office

/s/ Al Charfauros
NMC Facilities Maintenance
Manager

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235-NEWS

Kidd returns to Mavs in 8-player trade

DALLAS (AP)—Jason Kidd is a member of the Dallas Mavericks. Again. Finally. The long-discussed, once-scuttled and ultimately re-configured deal to bring Kidd from New Jersey back to the team that drafted him was finalized Tuesday. He was reintroduced in Dallas 14 years after the Mavericks made him the No. 2 pick.

Back then, Kidd was supposed to help turn around one of the worst franchises in sports. Now, as one of the league's best point guards, he's seen as a crucial piece in the Mavs' pursuit of a championship.

"There's no bigger reward than to have that championship trophy in your hand," said Kidd, who lost in the NBA finals twice with the Nets. "That's why I'm here. Because Dallas has its eye on that prize."

The eight-player deal, in the making since before the All-Star break and talked about a lot longer than that, sends Kidd, forward Malik Allen and guard Antoine Wright to Dallas.

The primary piece headed to New Jersey is point guard Devin Harris. The others are center DeSagana Diop, swingman Maurice Ager, forward Trenton Hassell and retired forward Keith Van Horn. New Jersey also gets two first-round draft picks and $3 million.

Van Horn and Hassell replace Jerry Stackhouse and Devean George in an original trade proposal. Stackhouse's presence in the deal was muddled by plans to get him back to Dallas—within the rules, although in a way the league frowned upon—and George used his veto power to block his involvement.

"It's been the most amazing, interesting trade we've ever done, and we've done some doozies here," Mavericks owner Mark Cuban said. "I've never seen anything like it, but all's well that ends well. We got the right guys."

AP

New Dallas Mavericks basketball players Jason Kidd (2), Antoine Wright (21) and Malik Allen (30) hold up their new jerseys after being traded from the New Jersey Nets during a news conference in Dallas, Tuesday, Feb. 19, 2008.

Kidd wasn't the answer in Dallas a decade ago, and he was shipped to Phoenix after 2 1/2 seasons. Five years later he was traded to the Nets, who went to back-to-back NBA finals in 2002-03.

New Jersey hasn't made a long playoff run since, and Kidd started talking trade a year ago, when he almost went to the Los Angeles Lakers. He went public with his latest trade demand last month.

"He's a once-in-a-lifetime type of guy to play with and coach," Nets coach Lawrence Frank said. "He's had an unbelievable impact on everyone in this organization and we wish him nothing but the best."

Cuban, who was a Mavericks season ticket holder the last time Kidd was in Dallas, is essentially gambling that the 1 1/2 seasons he'll have Kidd is worth more than the 4 1/2 seasons left with Harris running the offense.

Kidd, of course, is a proven commodity, but he turns 35 next month and is a decade older than Harris.

"In any business there's lulls," Cuban said. "Everybody was waiting for the postseason to start. You can't just say, 'OK, turn it on in the postseason.' I think Jason ... being that iconic All-Star will spark a lot of people."

Nets president Rod Thorn saw the same problem on New Jersey's end. He said as the Nets struggled this season, Kidd lost some of the intensity that defines him as a player, making the trade imperative.

Thorn said he first noticed it in December, an indirect reference to an incident in which Kidd sat out a game against the New York Knicks with a migraine, a move some considered a one-day walkout to force a trade.

"Over the course of time it became very evident that his heart wasn't in it," Thorn said. "The kind of player he is, if his heart's not in it then he's not the same player, and it became evident to me that his heart wasn't in it anymore. It just wasn't going to work."

This is the third big trade involving a Western Conference power as the teams prepare for the stretch run. Before the All-Star break, Shaquille O'Neal was dealt from Miami to Phoenix and Pau Gasol went from Memphis to the Los Angeles Lakers.

"We understand the competition is fierce, but we're not afraid of the competition," Mavericks coach Avery Johnson said.

Kidd's arrival should be a boon to reigning MVP Dirk Nowitzki, providing him with the easy baskets he used to get when teamed with Steve Nash. His presence also will open things up for Josh Howard, plus let Jason Terry spend more time at shooting guard.

Harris' numbers have gone up in each of his four seasons, helping him earn a five-year contract worth roughly $42 million before this season. However, he's nowhere near the distributor Kidd is, nor is he liable to get a triple-double. He may eventually have that well-rounded of a game, but the Mavericks decided they couldn't wait.

"We feel (Kidd's) skill set can help us finish stronger, finish games better," Johnson said. "Obviously he's not the guy we're going to lean on for points, points, points. He's going to help us because at the end of games, he just knows how to win."

Losing Diop hurts Dallas' front line, as he is the primary backup to starting center Erick Dampier. However, Diop—who is a free agent after this season—had fallen out of favor lately.

Allen was averaging 5.4 points in almost 16 minutes per game for the Nets.

Dallas also announced it waived forward Nick Fazekas, the 34th pick last year.

Anthony scores 29 as Nuggets beat Celtics in KG's return

DENVER (AP)—Carmelo Anthony scored 29 points, Allen Iverson added 28 and the Denver Nuggets spoiled the return of Kevin Garnett, holding on for a 124-118 victory over the Boston Celtics on Tuesday.

Denver also halted the Celtics' dominance over Western Conference teams this season, snapping their string of 16 straight wins.

Garnett, who had been out since Jan. 25 with a strained abdominal muscle, wasn't his flashy self, finishing with four points on 2-of-7 shooting in close to 21 minutes of action. He also had eight rebounds.

Paul Pierce scored 24 points, Rajon Rondo added 22 and Leon Powe had 13 points and 11 rebounds for the Celtics, who had won five straight.

Rockets 93, Cavaliers 85

At Cleveland, Rafer Alston scored 22 points, Yao Ming added 16 points and 14 rebounds, and Houston tied a team record with their ninth straight road win by beating Cleveland.

Houston last reeled off nine victories in a row on the road in 1993.

LeBron James, who won his second All-Star game MVP in three years on Sunday in New Orleans, finished with 26 points, 13 rebounds and 11 assists for Cleveland. It was his fifth triple-double this season and career No. 15.

Magic 103, Pistons 85

At Auburn Hills, Michigan, Rashard Lewis scored 20 points, reserve Keith Bogans added 19 and Orlando ended Detroit's 10-game winning streak.

On the game's first possession, Rasheed Wallace blocked a dunk attempt by fellow All-Star and new dunk champion Dwight Howard, but that was one of Detroit's only highlights. Orlando led by as many as 26 points in the fourth quarter.

Rodney Stuckey led Detroit with 16 points.

Knicks 113, Wizards 100, OT

At Washington, Zach Randolph had 24 points and 10 rebounds, Jamal Crawford added 21 points and New York broke a franchise record by scoring 23 points in overtime.

Three-pointers from Nate Robinson and Quentin Richardson and a pair of dunks from David Lee at the start of the extra period helped the Knicks pull away. New York broke the team mark of 19 overtime points, set in a victory over Detroit in 1964.

New York rallied from a nine-point, fourth-quarter deficit. It had been 0-3 in overtime games this season.

Antawn Jamison had 20 points and 13 rebounds for Washington.

Jazz 119, Warriors 109

At Salt Lake City, Deron Williams had 29 points and 12 assists, and Utah overcame a shaky first quarter to complete a sweep of the season series against Golden State.

All-Star Carlos Boozer had 16 points and 12 rebounds, and Mehmet Okur also had a double-double with 16 points and 10 boards. Andrei Kirilenko added 18 points for the Jazz, who have won 13 of 14.

Utah scored a season-high 77 points in the first half, outrunning the fast-paced Warriors after playing some spotty defense in the first quarter.

Al Harrington scored 21 points and Monta Ellis had 18 for Golden State.

Spurs 85, Bobcats 65

At San Antonio, Manu Ginobili scored 18 points to lead San Antonio past Charlotte in its first home game in more than three weeks.

Michael Finley scored 14 points and Ime Udoka added 12 points and 10 rebounds in San Antonio's third straight victory.

Raymond Felton led Charlotte with 19 points, Jason Richardson added 13 and Nazr Mohammed scored 12.

Timberwolves 104, 76ers 88

At Minneapolis, reserve Rashad McCants scored 20 points, Al Jefferson had 19 points and 14 rebounds, and Minnesota snapped a five-game losing streak.

Craig Smith, nicknamed "Rhino," bulldozed his way to nine first-half points for the Wolves before finishing with 11. McCants had nine in the fourth as the Sixers never got closer than 10 in the game's final 12 minutes.

The 76ers had their five-game winning streak snapped. Philadelphia held opponents under 85 points during the streak, all at home, but had allowed that many midway through the fourth quarter.

Andre Iguodala led the Sixers with 17 points.

SuperSonics 108, Grizzlies 101

At Seattle, Earl Watson scored a season-high 26 points for Seattle and Wally Szczerbiak had 24, including the go-ahead score with 31 seconds remaining.

The Sonics, who were without flu-ridden rookie star Kevin Durant, roared back from a 19-point deficit early in the second half to win for the first time in four games against Memphis this season.

Rudy Gay scored 23 points and Hakim Warrick had 22 for the Grizzlies, who lost their 10th consecutive road game and are 1-6 since trading star Pau Gasol to the Los Angeles Lakers on Feb. 1.

Lakers 122, Hawks 93

At Los Angeles, Kobe Bryant and Pau Gasol each scored 23 points before sitting out the fourth quarter, and Los Angeles beat Atlanta for its fifth straight victory.

It was Gasol's first home game with Los Angeles, Bryant's first since deciding to forego surgery on his injured shooting hand, and Mike Bibby's debut with Atlanta following Saturday's trade from Sacramento.

Joe Johnson had 18 points for the Hawks, who lost their season-worst fifth straight and sixth in a row on the road. Bibby had just five points and three assists in 16-plus minutes.

Kings 105, Trail Blazers 94

At Portland, Oregon, Ron Artest scored 24 points, Francisco Garcia added 23, and Sacramento snapped a three-game losing streak by beating Portland.

Travis Outlaw had 23 points for the flat Blazers, who lost their fifth straight.

Sacramento was playing its first game without veteran Mike Bibby, who was traded over the weekend to the Atlanta Hawks for point guards Anthony Johnson and Tyronn Lue, 2006 first-round pick Shelden Williams, veteran forward Lorenzen Wright and a 2008 second-round pick.

Astros' Tejada won't talk about steroids

KISSIMMEE, Fla. (AP)—Houston Astros pitcher Woody Williams walked into the clubhouse and saw a swarm of reporters gathered around Miguel Tejada. "Leave the guy alone!" Williams said with a smile. No chance.

Tejada arrived at spring training with his new team on Tuesday, and within minutes faced questions about the Mitchell Report and an FBI investigation looking into his alleged link to performance-enhancing drugs.

Tejada refused to answer any of them, preferring to discuss baseball and his fresh start with the Astros.

"I can't really talk about that situation," he said. "Right now, I just want to talk about baseball, because that's really my focus."

The Astros acquired the four-time All-Star shortstop from Baltimore on Dec. 12, the day before the Mitchell Report was released.

In the report, former teammate Adam Piatt claimed he gave steroids to Tejada in 2003, when they played in Oakland. The report included checks Tejada wrote to Piatt to purportedly pay for steroids. The report said Tejada refused to meet with Mitchell's investigators.

Asked if he could answer the allegations in the report, Tejada said, "No, I can't. Not at all."

A month after the report was released, the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee asked the Justice Department to investigate whether Tejada lied in an August 2005 interview about the perjury case of former teammate Rafael Palmeiro.

Palmeiro was suspended for a positive steroid test and suggested that Tejada provided him with a tainted shot of vitamin B12. Tejada denied the claim and he also told federal authorities that he never took performance-enhancers and had no knowledge of other players using or talking about steroids.

The FBI has launched an inquiry and Tejada could get jail time if he's indicted and found guilty.

"I can't really talk about that. It's not my position to talk about that," Tejada said. "Right now, my mind is really focused on just playing baseball."

Tejada seemed comfortable and relaxed on Tuesday as he fielded grounders, took batting practice and chatted with his new teammates. After four losing seasons in Baltimore—not to mention the mess with Palmeiro - the 31-year-old Tejada said he was rejuvenated when he found out he'd been traded to Houston.

"I feel like this year is my first year in the big leagues," the former AL MVP said. "I feel like I'm born again, like somebody just signed me from the Dominican. Every day, I can't wait to see the day coming, to come to the ballpark. I can't wait to show I'm the Miguel Tejada I used to be."

Tejada hit .296 with 18 homers and 81 RBIs in 2007. He's an offensive upgrade from previous shortstop Adam Everett, who batted .232 last season and was signed by Minnesota after Houston didn't pick up his contract.

The Astros stand by the acquisition of Tejada, despite the steroid issues hanging over him. Owner Drayton McLane happily greeted Tejada with a handshake early Tuesday morning.

"I still think it was the right decision," McLane said.

Manager Cecil Cooper spoke to Tejada briefly and avoided mentioning the steroid controversy.

"I just told him, 'Welcome to the Astros,' and that it was all about baseball," Cooper said. "And if I could help him in any way, feel free to ask, just relax and play baseball."

Cooper wasn't concerned about how Tejada would be perceived by the other players in the clubhouse.

"From what I hear, Miguel is a terrific guy," Cooper said. "I'm sure his teammates are going to hook onto him and they're going to get along well. If there's a problem in there, I'll deal with it. But there won't be a problem."

Though the Astros went 73-89 last season, Tejada said he felt a different vibe around his new team than he did with the Orioles, who've languished through 10 consecutive losing seasons.

"The only thing different in Baltimore, is they're rebuilding and here, they're trying to win," Tejada said. "It's totally different."

He'll lobby Cooper to play every day this season and he's eager to turn his focus to baseball—and only baseball—as soon as he can.

"I want to play for a winning team, I want to play for something," he said. "I like to play to win every day."

AP

Houston Astros shortstop Miguel Tejada warms up before taking batting practice during a Major League Baseball spring training workout Tuesday, Feb. 19, 2008 in Kissimmee, Fla.

UNC's Williams miffed by Coach K remarks

CHAPEL HILL, N.C. (AP)—North Carolina coach Roy Williams apparently doesn't think too highly of Duke coach Mike Krzyzewski's views on injury reports.

In a small tiff that has added the latest spice to college basketball's most intense rivalry, Williams took exception to a comment made by Krzyzewski on Sunday that the Blue Devils don't discuss injuries "unlike other schools."

While Krzyzewski never mentioned the third-ranked Tar Heels specifically, Williams felt the statement was a subtle jab at his team, which has had a much-publicized run of injuries and ailments in the past two weeks.

It was enough to have Williams, in a comment on his weekly radio show Monday, telling an unspecified person to "coach their own damn team, I'll coach my team."

On Tuesday, Williams found himself discussing the comments again instead of focusing on the Tar Heels' game at North Carolina State on Wednesday.

"It's not like I'm getting a dadgum plane and flying it around to say, 'Roy fell against a wall and banged his nose' or anything," Williams said in a news conference. "We have to do those things (talk about injuries) and everybody's hurt. But there's different stages of being hurt.

"If you're hurt and missing games, that's not exactly like having a hangnail. And so we do have some people that are getting hurt and missing games. I don't think that somebody should say we're putting it in front of the public."

When a reporter attempted to ask a follow-up question, Williams said he didn't want to discuss the comments further and have "battles through the media." But when the news conference ended, Williams came back to the topic once more.

"I said before we played Duke it's impossible to have any more respect than I do for Mike," Williams said, "but I felt like that comment was aimed towards us."

Duke team spokesman Jon Jackson declined to comment Tuesday, one day before the fifth-ranked Blue Devils travel to Miami.

Krzyzewski's comment came in a radio interview after Duke's loss at Wake Forest. While noting that freshman Nolan Smith had been playing through a knee injury for a few weeks, Krzyzewski added, "unlike other schools we don't release our injuries," according to the Web site for radio station WRBZ-AM in Raleigh.

The next day, Williams said on his weekly radio show: "Regardless of what somebody else says about they have injuries too, which is a bunch of bunk, so I don't give a crap what somebody else says, but coach their own damn team, I'll coach my team - in case anybody has heard some statements about that."

The comments between the Hall of Fame coaches adds to a brief history that includes a heated exchange during a 2000 NCAA tournament game between Duke and Williams' Kansas squad in which the coaches had to be separated by officials. Last year, things got a little chilly between them after a flagrant foul by Duke's Gerald Henderson broke the nose of North Carolina All-American Tyler Hansbrough late in a game.

In the days leading up to the latest matchup earlier this month, the coaches described a relationship that was respectful and cordial but not especially close.

The injuries have piled up quickly for the Tar Heels (24-2, 9-2 Atlantic Coast Conference). Point guard Ty Lawson is expected to miss his fifth straight game Wednesday due to a sprained left ankle, while Deon Thompson played just 9 minutes in Saturday's win against Virginia Tech due to a hyperextended left knee and could be limited again. Backup point guard Quentin Thomas (flu-like symptoms), forward Danny Green (flu) and swingman Marcus Ginyard (sprained right ankle, injured left big toe) are also playing through ailments.

The Tar Heels also lost reserve guard Bobby Frasor to a season-ending knee injury in December.

Red Sox DH Ortiz takes swings in cage

FORT MYERS, Fla. (AP)—David Ortiz took swings in the batting cage after reporting to spring training Tuesday and said he's nearly fully recovered from knee surgery he had after the Boston Red Sox won the World Series.

"I feel good," he said, "getting almost 100 percent"

About two hours later, World Series MVP Mike Lowell showed up. He hit .400 with a home run and four RBIs to lead Boston to a four-game sweep of the Colorado Rockies. The first official team workout for all players is scheduled for Friday.

Ortiz spent about 60 seconds talking with reporters as he walked without stopping about 100 feet from the cages to the Red Sox clubhouse.

Boston is "definitely" the team to beat, the designated hitter said. "We're the world champions and we're going to play like it. We'll see what's happening."

The Red Sox made few changes in the offseason.

Ortiz batted .370 with three homers in the postseason despite an injured right knee. Nine days after the final game, he had arthroscopic surgery to repair damaged cartilage. He still hit a career-high .332 with 35 homers and 117 RBIs in the regular season.

"I think I will be training and running at full speed by January," he said at the time. "It was a simple operation."

On Tuesday, he reported to camp with a new, longer hairdo and, when asked about it, said, "why, you don't like it?"

He also said he talked Tuesday with pitcher Curt Schilling, who is expected to be sidelined at least until the All-Star break with an injured right shoulder. Schilling worked out in the morning in the clubhouse.

"He said he'd be all right," said Ortiz, who smiled then added, "You know, he's just trying to call people's attention" to himself.

Lowell signed a three-year, $37.5 million contract in November.

The only regulars who haven't shown up in camp are Manny Ramirez, Julio Lugo and Coco Crisp. There is no indication any of them will miss Wednesday's reporting deadline.

And all of them will have one ultimate goal.

"We'll see if we can win another World Series," Ortiz said. "That would be kind of fun."

CNMI warriors off to Guam PXC

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

A five-man CNMIteam will be seeing action in next month's Pacific Xtreme Combat XIV: Evolution at the Guam Greyhound Park in Tamuning.

The team is composed of three fighters from Trench Tech Purebred Saipan Gym, one from Zalaka, and one from Marianas Elite.

Trench Tech will be sending Tetsuji Kato, Giovanni "Palaxi" Sablan, and Jason "Rush" Tarkong, while Andrew Sablan and Leeroy Sablan will carry Zalaka and Marianas Elite's banner.

Kato is the most veteran among the group after compiling a 21-8 record in almost five years of fighting on Saipan and in other off-island mixed martial arts events.

He will be facing Harris Sarmiento. Kato is expected to have his hands full against his opponent from Hawaii, who holds an 18-10 record and is a veteran of MMA events in the mainland.

Kato is aching to score a win after losing to Gilbert "El Niño" Melendez in "Strikeforce" at the Playboy Mansion in Beverly Hills, California on Sept. 29, 2007.

Tarkong, meanwhile, will go up against Guahan Top Team's John Tuck, who won against Giovanni Sablan in PXC XIII: Back From the Dead last Nov. 16 at the University of Guam Fieldhouse in Mangilao.

Tarkong will try to improve his 7-2 record. His last fight was against Team Haga's B.J. Taisacan in Rites of Passage III: Rise of the Warriors last Sept. 1 where he won by knockout.

The opponents of Giovanni Sablan, Andrew Sablan, and Leeroy Sablan have yet to be named.

Giovanni Sablan is expected to fight one of 808 Fight Factory's top 145-lb. warriors from Hawaii. He hopes to win his second straight match after beating the charismatic Ryan "The Dentist" Urquizu in Preba Hao X last Dec. 14 at the Guam Greyhound in Tamuning.

Sablan won by a third round technical knockout due to referee stoppage to improve his mixed martial arts record to 9-4.

Zalaka's Andrew Sablan, meanwhile, won his debut in Rites of Passage III: Rise of the Warriors on Sept. 1, 2007, but lost his first off-island match on Guam.

Sablan defeated Ryan Camacho in Rites of Passage III and suffered a loss two months after in PXC XIII: Back from the Dead on Nov. 16, 2007. He went down fighting against Jesse "The Spiderman" Taitano forcing his veteran opponent to three hard-fought rounds.

He lost via decision against one of Guam's top and explosive fighters.

D&Q

From Page 28

Joe Lizama, Payton Sakuma, and Ben Mesa led Spam's hit parade as they combined for nine of their team's 23 hits in the entire game.

Lizama went perfect at the plate and was a home run short of making the cycle with his double and triple to go with the four runs he scored and his two RBIs.

Sakuma only went 2-for-4 but managed to score three runs and had four RBIs. He had a two-run home run in the first inning and completed his trip at the plate with a two-run, inside-the-park home run in the third.

Mesa, batting second in the order, finished the game going 3-for-4 with two doubles and three runs scored.

The three veteran sluggers were at it again in Game 2, this time combining for eight of Spam's 22 hits, but this time they had plenty of help from Jonathan Camacho and Jun Lizama.

Lizama again nearly made the cycle but went a double short going 3-for-4 with two runs, a triple, and a solo homer in the sixth inning. Mesa went 3-for-4 with two runs, a triple, and one RBI.

Sakuma, 2-for-4, had another inside-the-park round-tripper that highlighted an eight-run fourth inning as Spam zoomed to a 16-3 lead, which they never relinquished. He also had three RBIs and a triple.

Camacho and Jun Lizama joined the hitting fray in the second game as they had back-to-back home runs in Spam's eight-run fourth inning barrage.

Camacho went 3-for-3 with an inside-the-park homer to go with his two runs, two doubles, and three RBIs, while Jun Lizama was a triple short of going for the cycle.

Lizama went 3-for-4 with a solo home run, a double, two runs, and two RBIs.

Dave Kapileo and B.J. Sablan nearly anchored a Beach Boys comeback in the fifth and sixth innings.

Kapileo blasted a grand slam with the ball sailing over the left field pole, while Sablan whacked a three-run home run in the sixth as they moved within 10-16.

Joe Sablan is SGA February Ace

Joe Sablan won the Saipan Golf Association Ace of the Month Tournament last Sunday, Feb. 17, at the Kingfisher Golf Links in Talafofo.

Sablan, who is SGA treasurer and was the monthly champion last December, actually finished tied with two other weekend warriors after the trio carded identical net scores of 67 each.

Sablan, however, edged John Takai and Jung Eun Taeck following a miraculous birdie at the lowest handicap hole, hole No. 17.

Jung, on the other hand, scooped the second-place plum and Takai settled for third place, closing the hole with a bogey and double bogey, respectively. Nineteen members grazed the 6,216-yard course last weekend.

Sablan finished the course with 48 in the front and an improved 42 in the back. Jung came in at 38 and 39, while Takai was a picture of consistency with 49s in the front and back.

SGA players all performed with improved scores during the event—a low gross of 76, a high gross of 99, and a high net of 79. Two tied at net 69, four at net 70, two each at net 72, 74, and 76, respectively. There were a total of 20 birdies and only one five-over par.

Steve Balakrishna beat Das Krishnan for the longest drive in hole No. 2, and Jess Castro outdistanced everyone in hole No. 14. Das, however, scooped the closest to the pin in hole No. 12, retired judge Edward Manibusan was without peer in hole No. 6, while Castro triumphed in hole No. 8 with Manny "Beach Boy" Alvarez having no match in hole No. 15.

Anyone interested in joining SGA or need more information about the club, should contact Joe Sablan, Larry Guerrero, and Ben Aldan at 287-4563, 287-1052, or 234-3176, respectively. ***(Mark Rabago)***

AUSTRALIA

From Page 28

Stewart then went on to dissect Victoria Chentsova's, Cooper Graf's, and Sarah Johnson's performances in Australia.

She said Victoria Chentsova swam in eight individual events and came home with six lifetime bests.

"This was really her first big trip, and just turning 10 years old last week, she is at the bottom age-wise of her competition. I was most impressed with her longer races as she is becoming a stronger distance swimmer in her early swimming career."

For the record Chentsova, swam the 50m free in 41.10 (same best time), the 100m freestyle in 1:29.7 (a life time best by 3.78 seconds), 200m freestyle in 3:14.16 (LTB by 8.68), 100m backstroke in 1:56.05 (LTB by 3.43), 50m butterfly in 54.61 (LTB by 3.76), and 100m breaststroke in 2:12.74 (LTB by 4.54).

Cooper Graf, meanwhile, built on his solid performance in the 2008 Heptathlon Meet by improving his swims in majority of the events he took part in, according to Stewart.

"Coop swam in nine individual events and came home with LTBs or at his best times in seven of those events. He has now gone under 2:20 in the 200m free twice, and under five minutes in the 400m freestyle three times. I believe he is ready to have some great drops in his next competitions. Impressive was his 100m lead-off split in our 400m free relay. It came at the end of a 10-hour day at the pool," he said.

Graf's performance in the nine events are as follows—100m freestyle in 1:06.26 (SBT), 200m freestyle in 2:19.81 (SBT), 400m freestyle in 4:57.51 (SBT), 100m backstroke in 1:21.81 (LTB by 1.32), 200m backstroke in 2:56.63 (LTB by 14.21), 100m breaststroke in 1:31.24 (LTB by 1.15), 200m IM in 2:48.51 (LTB by 0.30), and 100m relay lead off in 1:05.44 (LTB).

Stewart said Sarah Johnson matched Graf's improvement by improving on six out of 10 swims in Australia.

"Swimming against some great competition, she is not only a great sprinter, she is now becoming a very strong middle distance swimmer, as well as showing signs of great things in the backstroke events. She is now just three seconds away from the 15-16 record in the 400m freestyle," he said.

Johnson swam the 50m freestyle in 30.59 (LTB by 0.23), the 200m freestyle in 2:23.11 (LTB by 0.31), the 400m freestyle in 4:46.99 (LTB by 3.33), the 200m backstroke in 2:47.64 (LTB by 4.52), the 50m butterfly in 35.92 (LTB by 1.44), and the 200m IM in 2:52.73 (LTB by 2.66).

MV GLORIA II

From Page 28

while the 2008 Saipan International Fishing Tournament is expected to set sail in August, according to Masga.

The 2008 Wahoo Jackpot Derby was originally set last Jan. 9, but was postponed as 15-20 knots generating swells from five to seven feet were forecasted during that weekend.

MENUDO

From Page 28

do and Pikan Gaga might see win the pennant and earn the top seeding heading into the playoff round.

One team will be knocked out in each division with the Top 8 squads moving on to the playoff round in the men's, while the four remaining teams will battle it out for the two finals spot in the women's.

Out to foil Menudo's title bid is the second-running No Fear with their 7-3 mark, while Fanians (6-3) and Ol'Aces (6-4) remain within striking distance in third and fourth place.

CH-Hammer and Islanders are in fifth and sixth spots with similar 5-5 cards, while former co-leader Home Boyz is slowly slipping away, dropping to seventh place with a 4-6 record.

Beach Jammers, 2-7, and the young and talented Ma Numel'u, 1-9, complete the standings in the nine-team field.

JON PEREZ

Dexter Dillay of Ol'Aces, right, tries to block a Kaleo Olaitiman spike in their game in the men's division of the 2008 Indoor Volleyball Winter League Tuesday night at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Ol'Aces handed the struggling Home Boyz their third straight loss, 25-11, 25-19, 16-14.

Home Boyz has lost three of their last four games and has not won since sweeping Beach Jammers, 25-23, 25-20, 15-12, last Feb. 5.

In other games, CH-Hammer came back from an opening set loss to score a hard-earned 21-25, 25-21, 21-19 win, while No Fear prevented Ma Numel'u's upset bid with a clinical 25-21, 25-21, 15-8 decision.

Ma Numel'u snapped its eight-game losing skid last week when it scored its first win against an undermanned Ol'Aces, 25-16, 20-25, 15-10.

In the women's division, Pikan Gaga is comfortably ahead with a clean 7-0 mark followed by the identical 3-4 records of Seikid and Beach Jammers, while YoYo's holds a 4-4 card. Ta Chagi, 1-6, complete the standings.

Pikan Gaga continues to demolish its opponents adding Seikid as its next victim, 25-22, 21-25, 15-12, while YoYo's defeated Ta Chagi, 25-11, 25-20, 15-7.

Home Boyz will try to put an end to their losing skid when they face a dangerous CH-Hammer side in today's opening game, while Menudo tries to avenge its first round loss against Fanians in the 7pm second match. Ol'Aces takes on Beach Jammers at 8pm, while Ma Numel'u battles Islanders in the 9pm last match. No Fear will have a bye.

In the women's division, Beach Jammers and Seikid will go their separate ways in their 6pm match, while Pikan Gaga will face Ta Chagi in the second game. YoYo's will have a bye.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	41	10	.804	–
Toronto	28	23	.549	13
New Jersey	23	30	.434	19
Philadelphia	23	31	.426	19 1/2
New York	16	37	.302	26

Southeast Division

Orlando	34	21	.618	–
Washington	25	28	.472	8
Atlanta	21	29	.420	10 1/2
Charlotte	19	35	.352	14 1/2
Miami	9	42	.176	23

Central Division

Detroit	39	14	.736	–
Cleveland	29	24	.547	10
Chicago	21	31	.404	17 1/2
Indiana	21	32	.396	18
Milwaukee	19	34	.358	20

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

New Orleans	36	15	.706	–
San Antonio	35	17	.673	1 1/2
Dallas	35	18	.660	2
Houston	33	20	.623	4
Memphis	14	39	.264	23

Northwest Division

Utah	35	19	.648	–
Denver	33	20	.623	1 1/2
Portland	28	25	.528	6 1/2
Seattle	14	38	.269	20
Minnesota	11	41	.212	23

Pacific Division

Phoenix	37	16	.698	–
L.A. Lakers	36	17	.679	1
Golden State	32	21	.604	5
Sacramento	24	28	.462	12 1/2
L.A. Clippers	17	33	.340	18 1/2

Yesterday's Games

New York 113, Washington 100, OT
Houston 93, Cleveland 85
Orlando 103, Detroit 85
Minnesota 104, Philadelphia 88
San Antonio 85, Charlotte 65
Denver 124, Boston 118
Utah 119, Golden State 109
Seattle 108, Memphis 101
Sacramento 105, Portland 94
L.A. Lakers 122, Atlanta 93

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NMIVA INDOOR STANDINGS

Men's Division

	W	L	PF	PA	SW
Menudo	8	2	633	486	25
No Fear	7	3	625	566	19
Fanians	6	3	538	491	17
Ol'Aces	6	4	593	580	16
CH-Hammer	5	5	592	573	15
Islanders	5	5	562	587	14
Home Boyz	4	6	561	592	13
Beach Jammers	2	7	482	567	7
Ma Numel'u	1	9	494	636	6

Women's Division

	W	L	PF	PA	SW
Pikan Gaga	7	0	441	379	15
Seikid	3	4	402	401	11
Beach Jammers	3	4	393	426	9
YoYo's	4	4	483	470	12
Ta Chagi	1	6	363	415	7

PF-Points scored by team
PA-Points scored against team
SW-Sets won

'The Uproar' ushers start of MMA season

PHOTOS and TEXT By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

The Trench Tech Purebred Saipan Gym was the place to be last Saturday night as local fight fans were treated to a rocking start the 2008 season of mixed martial arts.

Rites of Passage IV: The Uproar signaled the start of the MMA season on Saipan with fight organizer Cuki Alvarez, who is also the man behind the Trench Warz series, promising more exciting events that would rock the world of no-holds barred fight fans.

Saturday's main event saw "Badd" Brad Palacios beating Matai Charley in what was dubbed as one of the greatest MMA fights in Rites of Passage history. The match went to the scorecards after both warriors showed great skill and execution of their techniques in the entire three three-minute rounds.

In the semi-main event, veteran fighter J.D. "Out" Reyes foiled the MMA debut of amateur boxer Conrad "The Ex-Con" Iba of Team Tinian.

"Badd" Brad Palacios, top, tries to keep Matai Charley pinned down in their match last Saturday in Rites of Passage IV: The Uproar at the Trench Tech Purebred Gym.

Conrad Iba of Tinian, back, tries to get out of J.D. "Out" Reyes' hold.

Matai Charley, bottom, tries to keep his chokehold in place as "Badd" Brad Palacios attempts to get out of the jam.

"Badd" Brad Palacios, left, enjoys a light moment with Matai Charley after their intense three-round match in Rites of Passage IV: The Uproar.

Top, C.J. Kladikim, right, blocks a sidekick from Nate Flores.

Left, Matai Charley, left, delivers a sharp blow to the body of "Badd" Brad Palacios, who countered with a side kick.

Bottom: Rights of Passage IV: The Uproar organizer Cuki Alvarez, right, interviews Joji Matsunaga of Japan after winning his fight against Zalaka's Faustino Litulumar.

Ton Cabrera, left, delivers a sharp right jab against Jeff Norita.

Alvin Taitano drags Alex Takeao to the corner as he tries to bring down his opponent.

Zalaka's Faustino Litulumar enters the Octagon prior to his fight against Japan's Joji Matsunaga.

Trench Tech's Shane Alvarez defeated Carl Jesse Takai of Team Haga to open up the night's matches. Gino Asanuma, meanwhile, made it back-to-back for Trench Tech when he beat independent warrior Gregory Camacho.

Zalaka's Lyle Deleon Guerrero won over Jess Santos thanks to the judges' scorecards, while Haga's Perry Takai outsmarted Pwang's Raegan Mality. J.J. Mality gave Team Pwang its first win beating Peter Borja.

Trench Tech's Ron Chisato handed South Side Syndicate's Rick San Nicolas another loss while compatriot Tom Kim knocked out Pwang's Peter Keju. Chris Layug needed 49 seconds to beat Ben Mettao of Zalaka.

Independent fighter A.J. Cepeda downed Johmar Untalan of 670 Gladiators with Stan Iakopo beat Arnold Balbin and Joji Matsunaga returned to Japan as a winner after beating Faustino Litulumar of Zalaka.

Alex Takeao defeated Alvin Taitano, while Joe Rabauliman won over Mark Hapdei. Predator's Jeff Norita defeated Ton Cabrera of No Team via referee stoppage, while Nate Flores won against C.J. Kladikim with their match going the full three rounds.

'The Uproar' ushers start of MMA season

The Trench Tech Purebred Saipan Gym was the place to be last Saturday night as local fight fans were treated to a rocking start to 2008 season of mixed martial arts.

27

Saipan Tribune
Sports

Kidd returns to Mavs in 8-player trade

Jason Kidd is a member of the Dallas Mavericks. Again. Finally. The long-discussed, once-scuttled and ultimately reconfigured deal to bring Kidd from New Jersey back to the team that drafted him was finalized Tuesday.

24

MV *Gloria II* wins Wahoo Jackpot Derby

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSISTANT EDITOR

Captain extraordinaire John T. Sablan and the crew of MV *Gloria II* won last Saturday's 2008 Wahoo Jackpot Derby after reeling in a 38.15-lb. wahoo.

Sablan said he and his crew, made up of Ray Guerrero, Tom Diaz, and Beltau "Bird Island" Palacios, caught the whopping wahoo in the waters west off Tinian and it took them about 10 minutes to subdue the fish.

The MV *Gloria II*'s captain said he has been an avid angler since 1997 and has two runner-up trophies in mahi-mahi derbies to show for it. Aside from the winning wahoo, Diaz and his crew also caught a big white tuna, a mahi-mahi, and a barracuda during Saturday's one-day tournament.

Nearly half the weight of MV *Gloria II*'s catch was the 19.9-lb. wahoo reeled in by the fishermen of *Dr. V*, which is Lt. Gov. Tim P. Villagomez's boat.

Dr. V's catch, however, was good enough for second place in the 2008 Wahoo Jackpot Derby. Arnold Seman piloted the *Dr. V* with the lieutenant governor himself, Health Secretary Kevin Villagomez, Tony Guerrero, and Wesley Somal serving as crew.

DJ Fish Mobile finished third in the wahoo competition, after captain Tony Majestro and his lone crewmember, Manding Legazpi, landed a 17.25-lb. fish.

Weigh master Ray Roberto said a total of 12 boats took part in this year's edition of the wahoo competition.

The event was organized by Saipan Fishermen Association and the Marianas Visitors Authority.

SFA treasurer Floyd Masga said last Saturday's sea conditions were ideal for the derby after the competition was scrapped last month because of high swells in the Marianas.

Masga, in behalf of SFA president Gene Weaver, would like to thank the Department of Lands and Natural Resources, Division of Fish and Wildlife, DPS Boating Safety Division, Emergency Management Office, and the Marianas Visitors Authority for supporting the event.

Two other fishing tournament are lined up for 2008. The annual Mahi-Mahi Derby is scheduled for March,

See MV GLORIA II on Page 26

MARK RABAGO
MV *Gloria II* captain John T. Sablan, second from left, and his crew made up of Ray Guerrero, Tom Diaz, and Beltau "Bird Island" Palacios pose with the 38.15-lb. winning wahoo they caught in last Saturday's 2008 Wahoo Jackpot Derby.

D&Q Spam sweeps Beach Boys

JON PEREZ
Members of D&Q Spam join officials of the CNMI Softball League for a group photo after receiving their championship trophy in the finals of the Business Slow-pitch Softball League on Tuesday at the Miguel Basa "Tan Ge" Pangelinan Field.

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

D&Q Spam completed its date with destiny after scoring a two-game sweep of Beach Boys in the championship of the 2007 CNMI Business Slow-pitch Softball League Tuesday night at the Miguel Basa "Tan Ge" Pangelinan Field.

Spam and Beach Boys played two games on Tuesday with the former scoring an 18-8 win to open up their title bid.

Spam actually failed to make it into the playoffs after finishing fifth with a 6-7 record. They earned a postseason trip after the second-running Jets, 9-4, failed to pay their entrance fee in full, prompting organizers to disqualify them.

With the Jets out, Spam earned the fourth and final playoff spot and faced a tall order in the run up to the finals when they went up against pennant champion Freedom Air.

Spam, however, pulled off a 13-12 upset win to knockout Freedom Air, while Beach Boys trounced Joeten Motors, 11-4, in the other semis match.

In Game 1, Spam came out firing early, scoring nine runs in the first four innings while their pitching held Beach Boys scoreless until the top of the fifth.

See D&Q on Page 26

Menudo, Pikan Gaga continue to lead foes

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Menudo and Pikan Gaga are enjoying their view from the top as they remained leaders of their respective divisions in the 2008 Indoor Volleyball Winter League at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Menudo and Pikan Gaga continue to hold the league's best records in the men's and women's divisions after Tuesday night's games.

Menudo hiked its record to 8-2 after brushing aside Beach Jammers, 25-21, 25-12, 18-20, while Pikan Gaga downed Seikid, 25-22, 21-25, 15-12, to remain undefeated after seven games.

If things continue as they are, Menu-

See MENUDO on Page 26

'Australia trip was learning experience for swimmers'

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSISTANT EDITOR

First of two-part series

The Far North Queensland Long Course Swimming Championships in Cairns, Australia may have netted the Saipan Swim Club 12 medals, but for its head coach Michael Stewart the competition was not all about bringing home the shiny hardware.

"The medals are great; however, I have always stressed to all my swimmers that challenging themselves to beat their previous best performances is much more important. If you continue to beat your best, the medals will come," he said.

Stewart stressed that off-island meets like the previous weekend in the Land Down Under are important from a developmental standpoint, especially for his current SSC team whose swimmers are short on experience.

"This trip was a learning experience for all of our swimmers, as they are still in the infancy of what international swimming is truly all about. They came home with flying colors this time," he said.

See AUSTRALIA on Page 26

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Abigail Martinsen, Junior Pamaran, Lester Lapuz, Blair Nicholls, Michael Moran Jr., Cooper Graf, Victoria Chentsova, and Sarah Johnson pose in the pool at the Far North Queensland Long Course Swimming Championships in Cairns, Australia.